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# JOHNSON'S LIFE OF DRYDEN

WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

F. RYLAND, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "A STUDENT'S HANDBOOK OF PSYCHOLOGY AND ETHICS,"  
"CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINES OF ENGLISH  
LITERATURE," ETC.



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## PREFACE.

**I**N the Notes to these editions of Johnson's "Lives" the Editor has endeavoured to consider not only the wants of young students, but also those of older readers, who may wish to know the authorities on which Johnson's statements are based. For the first time, nearly all the author's facts, and nearly all his quotations, have been traced back to their original sources, and chapter and verse given for them. The annotations of Cunningham and later editors have been very largely supplemented; and the present Editor ventures to believe that his work will be of service to all readers of the "Lives."

PUTNEY.





## INTRODUCTION

### I. LIFE OF JOHNSON.

**S**AMUEL JOHNSON was born at Lichfield on September 18th, 1709. His father, Michael Johnson, was a bookseller, who, at one time a well-to-do magistrate of the city, fell before his death into distressed circumstances. He was a high churchman and a Tory, with Jacobite leanings.

The child's physical organization was undermined by scrofula, the king's evil as it was then called, which afterwards scarred and distorted his features and left him a prey to extreme mental depression and other symptoms of nervous disease. As he grew older he was afflicted with convulsive movements, and he lost the sight of one eye. About his fifth year—he could not have been six—he was brought to London to be touched for the evil by Queen Anne. He was sent to Lichfield Grammar School, then under a very severe master, Mr. Hunter, one of the Cathedral clergy. He afterwards went to Stourbridge Grammar School (in Worcestershire), where he remained a year; but his school days were over at the age of sixteen. A couple of years at home were spent in desultory reading, “not voyages and travels” (he told Boswell), “but all literature, Sir, all ancient writers, all manly; though but little Greek so that when I came to Oxford, Dr. Adams, now Master of

Pembroke College, told me I was the best qualified for the University that he had ever known come there.”<sup>1</sup>

He went up to Oxford (Pembroke College), in the October of 1728, and he remained there, according to Boswell, until the autumn of 1731, although Croker and other recent authorities<sup>2</sup> believe that he left the University after only fourteen months' residence, in December, 1729. Who supplied the necessary funds for his University course is still an unsolved question; it could hardly have been his father, who was very badly off, and who died in an insolvent condition in 1731. However long he remained at the University, Johnson took no degree. He seems to have been a somewhat troublesome undergraduate; as a rough and self-reliant lad with the learning of a don might easily become. But he fell under the influence of that half-forgotten High Church revival which preceded the great Evangelical movement of the Wesleys; and religion became a great reality for him after he had read William Law's "Serious Call to a Holy Life."

After his departure from Oxford and the death of his father, Johnson passed a year of struggle, apparently without definite occupation except during the few months he spent as usher in the Grammar School of Market Bosworth, months of "complicated misery" which he recalled with "even a degree of horror."<sup>3</sup> In 1733 he went to stay for six months with his old school-fellow Hector, now a surgeon at Birmingham. Here he was thrown into the company of the chief bookseller of the town; and this circumstance seems to have led him to take up literary work. He settled in Birmingham, and in the next year or two wrote contributions for a sort of local "Spectator," besides translating and abridging Father Lobo's "Voyage to Abyssinia" from a French translation. In 1735 he married Mrs. Porter,

<sup>1</sup> Boswell, Bohn, i. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Boswell, Bohn, i. 405-409.

<sup>3</sup> Boswell, Bohn, i. 50.

the widow of a Birmingham tradesman. The bride was forty-eight, the bridegroom not quite twenty-six. But Johnson declared long afterwards<sup>1</sup> that it "was a love marriage on both sides," and the married life of the strangely assorted pair seems to have been very happy. "Tetty" had a fortune of about £800, and on this pecuniary basis Johnson set up a school at Edial, near Lichfield. He had only a few pupils (Boswell says three) one of whom was David Garrick. The school was soon seen to be a failure, and in the spring of 1737 Johnson and Garrick came to London to seek their fortunes.

Johnson brought with him part of a tragedy, "Irene," which it was his first business to finish. But the play did not see the light till 1749.

Several years' experience as a hack-writer, a doer of literary odd jobs, lay before Johnson. At that date journalism was not a lucrative profession, if, indeed, such a profession can be said to have existed at all. Although Johnson soon got work on Cave's "Gentleman's Magazine," one of the best of the monthly periodicals, he must have had a hard and anxious time for a year or so. However, Boswell thinks that in 1738 he was already earning "a tolerable livelihood."<sup>2</sup> In 1738 his wife joined him in London, and in 1738 too came honour as well as guineas. On the same morning as Pope's "Epilogue to the Satires" appeared Johnson's "London," an imitation of Juvenal's third satire. The work of the new writer was not eclipsed by that of the most illustrious literary man of the age, and in a week a new edition of Johnson's poem was called for. A life of Father Paul Sarpi, the historian of the Council of Trent, was his first important contribution to the "Gentleman's Magazine," and afterwards (1739-43) he wrote for it short biographies of Drake, Blake,

<sup>1</sup> Boswell, Bohn, i. 60.

<sup>2</sup> Boswell, Bohn, i. 78.

Sydenham, and others, literary criticism and miscellaneous essays, and reported the debates in Parliament, or rather worked them up from such rough notes as could be furnished by persons paid to attend. In 1744 he produced a life of Richard Savage, a Bohemian literary man who had been his friend, and who had died the year before. This biography was afterwards embodied in the "Lives of the Poets."

In 1747 Johnson issued his "Plan for a Dictionary of the English Language," addressed to Philip Dormer, Earl of Chesterfield. The great dictionary, which was published by a group of booksellers, what would now-a-days be called a syndicate of publishers, occupied most of his time for the next seven years. He got little or no help from Chesterfield, and as he had to employ six clerks the expenses were considerable. Most of the 1,500 guineas which the booksellers had contracted to pay him were received on account before the work appeared.

"The Vanity of Human Wishes," an imitation of Juvenal's tenth satire, appeared in the January of 1749, and in February "Irene" was at length produced on the stage of Drury Lane by Garrick, who had deserted the law, for which he was intended, and had become the greatest actor and theatrical manager of the day. The tragedy was not a success, but thanks to the kindly zeal of Garrick, it ran for nine nights, and Johnson's share of the receipts, together with the payment for press rights, amounted to very nearly £300. From March, 1750, to March, 1752, he issued twice a week a periodical essay called the "Rambler;" there existed many such imitations *longo intervallo* of the "Spectator," some grave and some gay, and Johnson's was the most serious of all. His wife, much loved and long lamented, died on the day on which the last "Rambler" appeared. Although not very popular during its serial publication, it proved a great success when collected in

volumes, and on it was founded Johnson's reputation as a moralist.

In 1755 the Dictionary at last saw the light, in two great folio volumes. Since that day, philology has become scientific, and the crude etymologies of Johnson provoke the mirth of modern scholars. But his Dictionary is an enormous advance on its incomplete and unsatisfactory predecessors. Just before it appeared, when he began "to see land after having wandered in this vast sea of words,"<sup>1</sup> the University of Oxford granted him an M.A. degree, and he was now recognized as at the head of the literary world of London. He continued to write for the magazines, and to one of them, the weekly "Universal Chronicle," contributed during 1758-1760 the series of essays known as the "Idler." His gloomy oriental story "Rasselas" was written "in the evenings of a single week," in the early spring of 1759, in order "to defray the expense of his mother's funeral and pay some little debts which she had left."<sup>2</sup> Besides these and miscellaneous reviews and essays, he wrote prefaces to books, dedications, addresses, and speeches.

In 1762 he received a pension of £300 a year from the crown in recognition of his literary labours; and now at last at the age of fifty-three he was put beyond the need of daily toil for his daily bread. Henceforth he wrote comparatively little.

Although he wrote little, he talked much; and he became the centre of a brilliant group of eminent men who honoured him and loved his society. The famous Literary Club was founded by Sir Joshua Reynolds and Johnson in 1764, and originally consisted of twelve members, among whom were Burke, Goldsmith, Topham Beauclerk (a dissipated man of fashion), Bennet Langton (a gentleman and a

<sup>1</sup> Boswell, Bohn, i. 216.

<sup>2</sup> Boswell, Bohn, i. 269.

scholar with "a mind as exalted as his stature"), and Sir John Hawkins, the author of a "History of Music." The numbers were afterwards increased several times; but in 1780 the maximum was fixed at forty. Boswell, Garrick, Gibbon, Sheridan, Percy, Adam Smith, Sir William Scott (Lord Stowell), Sir William Jones, and the Wartons, were amongst the early members. Until 1783 the club met at the "Turk's Head" in Gerrard Street, Soho.

Johnson's conversation has been preserved for us by the zeal and industry of James Boswell, a young Scotch advocate, whose "Life of Dr. Johnson" is not only the best biography, but perhaps in the words of Macaulay "the most delightful narrative in the language." Boswell was a bright, intelligent and amiable young man with a passion for pushing his acquaintance among interesting people. He was somewhat vain, and unaffectedly undignified, and there was about him a want of reserve which amounted to a kind of intellectual immodesty. But his weaknesses endear him to his readers, and his book is great just because he had the important qualifications of unsparing diligence and acute perception, real insight into character, true admiration for greatness, and the gift of easy and pleasant narration. Meeting Johnson in the May of 1763, he has left us a wonderful record of the last twenty-one years of the great man's life.

Johnson was a conversational gladiator; he talked, as he owned, for victory. He loved a paradox in conversation though he disliked it in print, because it made an immediate impression, and gave an instant opportunity for a battle of words. This made him glory in his prejudices and exaggerate them. In his view of life he was, to some extent, what we now call a pessimist; he suffered much from ill-health and depression. But he had "a noble and a true conceit of god-like amity." Surrounded by his friends, he appears like a Christian Socrates, a wise and tolerant old

man, mingling freely in the everyday enjoyment of his younger companions, without any dyspeptic protests against such of their pleasures as he thought fit not to share.

In 1765 he came to know Mr. Thrale, the proprietor of a great brewery, a rich man and a member of parliament. Much of Johnson's time during the next sixteen or seventeen years was spent at Mr. Thrale's house at Streatham. His wife, Hester Lynch Thrale, a charming little lady, full of high spirits, did much to make Johnson happy, and "his irregular habits" as Boswell says, were "lessened by association with an agreeable and well ordered family."<sup>1</sup> The University of Dublin gave him the degree of LL.D. in the year 1765, and ten years afterwards his own University gave him a doctor's degree in laws. His edition of "Shakespeare" was published in 1765 with an important preface. In 1770 he produced a political pamphlet with reference to the expulsion of Wilkes from the House of Commons, the "False Alarm;" this was next year followed by another, "Thoughts on the Late Transactions respecting Falkland's Islands." A third, "Taxation no Tyranny," 1775, maintained the right of the British parliament to tax the American colonists. None of these produced any effect, however momentary.

At the age of sixty-four (1773), Johnson took with Boswell a long tour in the Highlands of Scotland and the Hebrides. This was quite an adventurous expedition for an unwieldy man of his years, at a time when roads and wheeled carriages were unknown in the islands; and the "Great Cham of Literature" underwent not only a great deal of discomfort, but some considerable danger. But he went through it all with patience and good humour; and he has left us an account of it in his "Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland" (1775), although most people

<sup>1</sup> Boswell, Bohn, ii. 17.



will prefer to read Boswell's gossiping and lively "Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides." In 1774 Dr. Johnson went with the Thrales on a tour in Wales, and in 1775 he visited France with them.

His last literary undertaking was to write Prefaces, biographical and critical, to the works of the English poets, included by the syndicate of booksellers in their great edition of 1779-1781. These Prefaces were soon republished as "Lives of the English Poets." Johnson was not responsible for the selection of names, though it was at his suggestion that the works of Blackmore, Watts, Pomfret, and Yalden were added; a selection which excludes the great Elizabethans and the amatory and religious poets of the mid seventeenth century. Chaucer, and Spenser, and Shakespeare, Herrick, and Herbert are indeed absent; but then have we not Walsh and "Rag" Smith, Duke and King, and Sprat? The work was done very unevenly, and is very unequal in value. There was not very much consultation of unpublished authorities. But he used Spence's MS. Collection of Anecdotes, lent by the Duke of Newcastle; and he was at some little pains to insert gossip and personal reminiscences, which would otherwise have vanished. The "Lives" remain our chief authority for many of the minor writers; while no modern biographer can afford to neglect the accounts given by Johnson of the great writers of the early eighteenth century. Of the criticism contained in the book, something will be said presently.

During the half-century he spent in London, Johnson had lived in nearly a score of different places. At first he changed his lodgings frequently. After his wife joined him in 1738 he lived in Castle Street, which runs parallel with Oxford Street; and then in the Strand and in several of the adjoining streets, in Holborn, in Gough Square (1748-1758), in Staple Inn, in Gray's Inn, then for five

years in Inner Temple Lane (1760-1765), in Johnson's Court, Fleet Street (1765-1777), and in Bolt Court, Fleet Street, for the last seven years of his life. In his house he had accumulated an extraordinary group of feeble and unfortunate people, whom he treated with great kindness and charity: Robert Levett, a broken-down medical man, in whose skill Johnson professed the greatest trust; Miss Williams, a pale, shrunken old lady afflicted with blindness; Mrs. Desmoulins and her daughter, to whom he allowed half-a-guinea a week, and Miss Carmichael. These inmates gave Johnson unnecessary trouble by their frequent quarrels. He told Mrs. Thrale on one occasion: "Williams hates everybody; Levett hates Desmoulins and does not love Williams: Desmoulins hates them both; Poll loves none of them."<sup>1</sup>

In 1781 he lost his friend Mr. Thrale, who had made Johnson one of his executors. Mrs. Thrale soon formed an attachment to an Italian musician named Piozzi, and in the interests of her children as well as herself Johnson opposed this union. In 1784, however, she married, much against Johnson's wish, and their friendship was at an end. He suffered a great deal from asthma and sleeplessness. After visiting Oxford, Lichfield, and Birmingham in the summer, he was taken worse in November, and died on December 13th, 1784, aged 75.

Johnson was one of the most honest and independent of men; his powerful, masculine nature, and his hatred of unreality sometimes led him to speak with almost brutal violence; but there was a great depth of tenderness under his rough exterior. People of narrow natures perceived only the outside. Mrs. Boswell said to her husband: "I have seen many a bear led by a man, but I never before saw a man led by a bear."<sup>2</sup> But Goldsmith had keener

<sup>1</sup> Boswell, Bohn, iii. 363.

<sup>2</sup> Boswell, Bohn, ii. 249.

insight when he said, "He has nothing of the bear but the skin."<sup>1</sup> He had the firmest convictions in religion and politics; he disliked Whiggism and dissent; but some of his greatest friends were Whigs, and some of his favourite authors were Nonconformists. We need not (with Macaulay) call him a bigot, because he practised abstinence on Good Friday. Judged by the standard of the age his mind was singularly free from superstitions, political and theological. He was less superstitious than Doddridge or Wesley, and other pious contemporaries, and who shall complain of his conditional belief in the Cock Lane ghost, a belief necessarily assumed merely for the purpose of examination, in these days of the Psychological Society?

"One thing he did," says Leigh Hunt, "perhaps beyond any man in England before or since—he advanced, by the powers of his conversation, the strictness of his veracity, and the respect he exacted towards his presence, what may be called the personal dignity of literature."

## II. JOHNSON'S CRITICISM.

Johnson's literary attitude is that of the average practical man, caught young and educated. He accepts the critical standards of the age, without much misgiving, and seldom goes behind them to ask the why and the wherefore. In the words of Macaulay he "decided literary questions like a lawyer, not like a legislator." Now-a-days the critics try to decide them like philosophers, or men of science.

The main object of modern criticism is to show us how to understand, and how to enjoy, literary or artistic work. It strives to trace the special laws which underlie the

<sup>1</sup> Boswell, Bohn, ii. 76.

different kinds of excellence. It does not assume that great literary achievement is always dependent on the same conditions, that there are any universal and necessary canons of beauty which will be always exemplified in the finest work. The best modern critics approach a great poem somewhat as men of science approach a fact of nature. The duty of the critic is to analyze the complex effect produced on us, and to exhibit separately the conditions of its production. Although we may recognize that some types of beauty are more impressive, or more insistent, or more complete, than others, it is not for the critic to classify literary works as good or bad merely because they embody the particular ideals which he regards as most perfect.<sup>1</sup> Many critics do not accept this view of their functions even now. In the eighteenth century scarcely any accepted it. They pronounced a judgment on a work because it was, or was not, in accordance with the literary ideals then accepted. They did not stop to inquire whether there were other literary ideals equally valid.

The literary models of the eighteenth century were determined by three principal factors—regard for morality, regard for the classics, and regard for the opinion of the average plain man; in other words, by edification, correctness, and common sense. And the greatest of these three was common sense.

On the first of the ideals there is no need to say much. When we find Dennis laying down that it is the "duty of every tragic poet to inculcate a particular Providence," we see that he carries the union of Church and Stage to a very exacting degree. When Dr. Johnson grumbles at Gray's "Bard," because it does not "promote any truth, moral or political," we are struck with the

<sup>1</sup> On what has been called Inductive Criticism, see Professor R. G. Moulton's "Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist," Introduction.

cramping effect on literature of this insatiable desire for edification. We are reminded of the senior wrangler who had been induced to read "Paradise Lost," and who returned the book with the remark that he did not see what it proved. The eighteenth century did not believe in art for art's sake. It was still dominated by Puritan scruples. Defoe lards his "Moll Flanders" with pious reflections—often half ironical, as it seems to the modern reader; while "Pamela" is "published in order to cultivate the principles of Virtue and Religion in the Minds of the Youth of Both Sexes," and Swift himself, the supreme master of cynical humour, defends the "Beggar's Opera" in all seriousness as "an excellent moral performance."

The term "correctness," so often used by the eighteenth century critics, is difficult to explain. It involves perfection of technique, the avoidance of all inadequacies and excesses of form; the achievement of clearness and precision in language, metre, and rhyme, and in what may be called the anatomy of epic and tragedy. There must be the proper word in the proper place; the right number of syllables in the line; the rhymes must be true; the work must begin and end in the proper way; the story must be told within the proper limitations as to length, number of books or acts, number of characters, and so forth. The ideal aimed at, the approximation to which constituted correctness, was, however, not quite clearly defined. It was partly due to study of the French poets and critics of the reign of Louis XIV., and partly to the study of the sources from which these derived their inspiration, the classical poets and critics.

A dread of all strong feeling and of any vividness of expression which was likely to be regarded as hyperbolic in a very conventional age, went along with a dislike of the unsophisticated, the merely ordinary and simple. On the one hand there was the Scylla of "enthusiasm," on the other

the Charybdis of the "familiar" and the "gross." Hence the absence of any fanciful or passionate lyrical poetry, hence the frigid decorum of the epics and tragedies. A special poetical diction followed as a matter of course; the poet required a "system of words at once refined from the grossness of domestic use, and free from the harshness of terms appropriated to particular arts."<sup>1</sup>

Lord Macaulay in his boisterous attack on "correctness" in the essay on Moore's "Life of Byron,"<sup>2</sup> makes two mistakes. He regards poetry as a purely imitative art; and he assumes that a purely imitative art is freed from all allegiance to the ideal. Now poetry is at once a representative art like sculpture or painting, and a presentative art like music. Its object is not merely to put before us scenes which are not present and events which we have never witnessed, but to create for the ear beautiful melodies and harmonies of verse. It affects our emotions not only by what it puts before the visual imagination, but also by its appeal to the auditory and muscular sensations of tone and rhythm. Macaulay's second error is more important. An imitative or representative art is not absolved from all regard for beauty; its sole aim is not accuracy of reproduction. Even a photograph is largely idealistic: pose, background and accessories, lighting, degree of detail, these points, and many more, require consideration and selection; and selection implies an ideal. The object of the photographer, and *à fortiori* of the painter or the poet, is not to produce an exact representation, but to produce a representation sufficiently exact to form the starting point of waves of suggestion. And the direction of these waves he controls by the exclusion of what is commonplace, or exaggerated, or unpleasant. And in this need for avoiding what clashes with our sense of

<sup>1</sup> Johnson's "Lives," Bohn, i. 435.

<sup>2</sup> "Essays," pp. 148-151.

beauty, we have the justification of rules, or rather principles, of "correct" form.

But these rules, like the principles of morality, tend to be regarded as good in and for themselves. The critics come to think that merit lies in the obedience to rule, and not in the achievement of what the rule was intended to secure. Comply with all the precepts laid down by Aristotle and Longinus, by Horace and Boileau, and your work will be perfect and immortal.

Much, indeed, of the eighteenth century poetry is simply unreadable; not, however, because it conforms to arbitrary rules, but because the poetical impulse which produced it was weak and chill. When a man of poetical genius like Pope, or Gray, or Goldsmith, writes, his work gains at least as much as it loses by compliance with fixed canons of literary form. What it surrenders in energy of expression and uncalculated felicity of achievement is made up to it by dignity, suggestiveness, and restraint. We have long since seen the end of that reaction against literary form which is exemplified by what Mr. Jacobs<sup>1</sup> terms the "amorphous masses called poems" produced by Southey and, we may add, Wordsworth. Many of our poets to-day are as much formalists as any of the eighteenth century writers; Tennyson, Matthew Arnold, Austin Dobson, each is, after his own kind, a supreme master of technique.

But, notwithstanding the reverence for correctness, common sense is the central ideal in eighteenth century literature and criticism. It is the final test of excellence. "By the common sense of readers uncorrupted with literary prejudices, after all the refinement of subtlety and the dogmatism of learning, must be finally decided all claim to poetical honours."<sup>2</sup> The Augustan age was eminently a social one. The tastes of the best

<sup>1</sup> "Tennyson and 'In Memoriam,'" by Joseph Jacobs, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Johnson's "Lives," Bohn, iii. 384.

and most conventional classes in a well-organized State formed the standard which Addison, and Pope, and Richardson had before them. Corsairs and outlaws and peasants were to be the ideal figures of the reaction under Byron and Scott and Wordsworth, after Rousseau had taught that the "state of nature" was superior to the social condition. To the men of the eighteenth century the "state of nature" presented few attractions. Their worship of common sense was due to their respect for properly ordered society. The beliefs of the vast majority of such a society tend to become alike, one type of opinion is formed. *My* common sense is the reflection in me of the average opinions of other plain men. "Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus" becomes the criterion of truth. It requires a man of extraordinary courage to question beliefs so universal. They are found to fit in with the needs of practical life, and Berkeley is refuted with a kick. Science is freed from the "jargon" of technical terms; and philosophy is to be "brought out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables, and coffee-houses." Superficiality incarnate in the person of Tillotson occupies the pulpit.

It is, however, common sense which saves Johnson from being a pedant. Correctness is no doubt important, but common sense is still more important. He is quite prepared to criticise Aristotle, if Aristotle is in conflict with common sense. He does not, like Dryden or even Addison, quote Bossu and Boileau with bated breath.

Johnson's criticism is thus usually right when he lays down some general truth of form, or deals with some question of formal consistency. He can point out contradictions, errors of reasoning, and errors of fact, faulty similes and imperfect rhymes. He falls short only when imagination and sympathy are required. He has not that fine natural insight into unfamiliar modes of action and feeling which



makes a critic of the highest order. That alert perception of beauty which comes from ready sympathy with the artistic aims of others is absent; he sees only that a rule is broken, that a formal absurdity has been perpetrated; the beauty which it strives to embody escapes him. Speaking generally, we may say that what he lays down in criticism is true as far as it goes. It is not the whole truth, of course; no man ever sees the whole truth, and certainly no one proposition can ever contain the whole truth. But it is a part of the truth which it is unsafe to neglect.

What he says, for instance, about poetical diction<sup>1</sup> is true enough: "Words too familiar or too remote defeat the purpose of a poet. From those sounds which we hear on small or on coarse occasions we do not easily receive strong impressions or delightful images; and words to which we are nearly strangers, whenever they occur, draw that attention on themselves which they should transmit to things." But when he comes from laying down these general laws to apply them to particular cases he is liable to overlook the special circumstances. His condemnation of Dryden's nautical phraseology is undoubtedly too unqualified; he has not appreciated the superior vividness which results from the use of such highly specialized language. His condemnation of the over-elaborated and frigid conceits of the metaphysical school is as good as possible,<sup>2</sup> but their fine lyrical talent he seems scarcely to have noticed, much less to have felt. He calls attention to Gray's occasional failure in a forced metaphor or simile and to what he happily calls the "cumbrous splendour" of the odes, but he has no ear for Gray's bright picturesqueness of phrase and his fine subtlety of rhythm.

<sup>1</sup> "Lives," Bohn, i. 435 (compare i. 448).

<sup>2</sup> "Lives," Bohn, i. 24, 52.

Johnson again is entirely right to point out that the pastoral form and the allegorical allusions of "Lycidas" are highly artificial, and give a tone of unreality to the poem. "Passion plucks no berries from the myrtle and ivy, nor calls upon Arethusa and Mincius. Where there is leisure for fiction there is little grief. Its form is that of a pastoral whatever images it can supply are long ago exhausted, and its inherent improbability always forces dissatisfaction on the mind." Yet, we ask, by what fatality does the critic come to utter in reference to "Lycidas" those truths which, if applied to the pastorals of Pope or Philips, we should not attempt to resist? And what are we to think of Johnson's capacity for directly perceiving beauty, when he adds, "surely no man could have fancied that he read 'Lycidas' with pleasure had he not known the author."<sup>1</sup> This surely is letting his judgment get the better of him with a vengeance.

But after we have made all the necessary deductions, Johnson's criticism remains full of value, and especially for us. In periods when imagination and emotion are dominant in literature, and when men take most delight in just those literary elements which are least allied to pure reason, it is necessary that we should be sometimes recalled to the recognition of its more orderly, abstract and intellectual elements. Though the formal aspects of literature have not all the importance which the eighteenth century assigned to them, they have much more importance than the nineteenth is inclined to attribute to them. And nothing is more likely to enforce this on us than the grave sanity, the practical knowledge of the world, and the moral elevation of Johnson's criticism.

<sup>1</sup> "Lives," Bohn, i. 167, 168.

## III. JOHNSON'S STYLE.

It is usually said that Johnson's style is highly latinized, and that it delights in polysyllables. This is certainly not true of the "Lives of the Poets;" though it has some slight foundation as applied to the "Rambler."

The following results were obtained from examining four passages (each of 200 lines) in each of the works mentioned:—

In the "Rambler:—"

30·5 per cent. of words of classical origin.

19       "       "       of more than two syllables.

In the "Lives of the Poets:—"

28·7 per cent. of words of classical origin.

13·1     "       "       of more than two syllables.

In Macaulay's "Essays:—"

28·6 per cent. of words of classical origin.

16·5     "       "       of more than two syllables.

In two critical articles in the "Athenæum" (1893):

28·5 per cent. of words of classical origin.

17·5     "       "       of more than two syllables.

It will be noticed that the proportion of words of classical and Romance origin in the "Lives" is almost exactly the same as the proportion of these words in Macaulay, and in the reviewers of to-day. In the use of long words Johnson is actually more sparing than Macaulay and the writer in the "Athenæum." He has, I fancy, got his reputation for excessive Latinism from his habit of employing these long words just where most writers would use short ones; his familiar passages are much fuller of four-syllable words than those of the other writers

mentioned, but he reduces his average by indulging in fewer polysyllables than the more modern writers, when he comes to a more formal and technical passage. It is probably this employment of long and sonorous classical words when we expect short and unobtrusive English ones, which helps to give the impression of stiffness and ponderosity.

Thus for "greediness" he says "avidity," and for "freeing" he says "manumission;" "cool courage" he renders by "deliberate intrepidity," and instead of calling a translation "too free," he terms it "licentiously paraphrastical."

Allied with this is his tendency to use the abstract for the concrete, *e.g.*, "Whiggism" for "Whigs." He tells us that Milton's "natural port is gigantic loftiness," or that Warburton "excelled in critical perspicacity," where adverbs and adjectives would do at least as well. And he is fond of writing a couple of abstract nouns where most writers would employ only one linked with an adjective: *e.g.*, he speaks of "imprudence of generosity or vanity of profusion" instead of "imprudent generosity or vain profusion." Similar to these are such sentences as follow:—"No writer had yet undertaken to reform either the savageness of neglect or the impertinence of civility;" "He never spared any asperity of reproach or brutality of insolence." And he speaks of an attempt "to represent the whole course of things as a necessary concatenation of indissoluble fatality."

Johnson's sentences are seldom long. There are none of the cumbrous and involved clauses, in which our writers from Hooker to Locke, so frequently delighted. If a sentence exceed three lines, it is usually broken up by semicolons into co-ordinate and virtually unconnected parts.

But these uninvolved sentences are not always natural in

structure. Johnson is fond of inversion; and a favourite device of his is that of beginning a sentence with a prepositional phrase: "To a thousand cavils one answer is sufficient." "Of the first stanza the abrupt beginning has been celebrated." Or he begins with a dependent clause: "When the Hanoverian succession was disputed, Tickell gave what assistance his pen would supply." "That in the reigns of Charles and James the 'Paradise Lost' received no public acclamations is readily confessed." He gives an appearance of inversion to some sentences by omitting the impersonal "it" we usually employ when the real subject is a noun clause. Instead of saying "It is to be lamented that——" he writes, "That this poem was never written is reasonably to be lamented."

The late Professor Minto<sup>1</sup> points out that Johnson is fond of "abruptly introducing a general principle before the particular circumstance that it applies to." This peculiarity, he adds, was adopted by Macaulay, whose style owes more to that of Johnson than is usually acknowledged. In fact, we may say that Macaulay's style is Johnson's, broken into short spasmodic sentences, freed from inversion, and rendered concrete.

Antithesis and balance are constantly employed. Opposed terms are set over against each other; and a strict parallelism is observed in order to emphasize the opposition. No English writer since the time of Lyly had employed this rhetorical artifice to the same extent. No writer until Macaulay employed it again to the same extent. After the lumbering and trailing clauses of the seventeenth century, it is delightful to get these clear-cut epigrams: "He thought woman made only for obedience, and man only for rebellion." "He hated monarchs in the State, and prelates in the Church; for he hated all whom he was

<sup>1</sup> "English Prose Writers." (Johnson.)

required to obey." "He was never reduced to the necessity of soliciting the sun to shine upon a birthday, of calling the graces to a wedding, or of saying what multitudes had said before him. When he could produce nothing new, he was at liberty to be silent." "Pope was not content to satisfy; he desired to excel, and therefore always endeavoured to do his best; he did not court the candour, but dared the judgment of his reader; and expecting no indulgence from others, he showed none to himself." It is easy to multiply such passages; and, indeed, it must be owned that much of their effect is lost by the frequency with which they are repeated.<sup>1</sup>

Among the occasional faults of Johnson's style we may note his careless employment of the pronouns of the third person, a laxity common enough with the writers of the eighteenth century. One instance will suffice. Speaking of Pope and Warburton, Dr. Johnson tells us that:—"He [Pope] introduced him [Warburton] to Mr. Murray, by whose interest he became preacher at Lincoln's Inn, and to Mr. Allen, who gave him his niece and his estate, and by consequence a bishopric. When he died he left him the property of his works." The confusion and ambiguity could scarcely be worse. Another fault which sometimes occurs, is one of sentence structure. Although Johnson's sentences are usually short, they sometimes take the form of a long and loosely connected string of statements, grammatically connected, but having no logical coherence. It is possible that he now and then introduced these more colloquial paragraphs as a set off to the somewhat exaggerated abruptness and emphasis of his ordinary style.

His more elaborate sentences are carefully constructed with what musicians would call suspended resolutions; and differ in this way from what some one terms the flippant

<sup>1</sup> The antithesis, too, is often, as with Lyly, apparent rather than real.

snip-snap of Macaulay His style is often harmonious, though it is not worthy to be compared in this respect with the style of Sir Thomas Browne, or with the best prose of Milton. It is often wanting in flexibility, and sometimes in vivacity. But it is always clear, weighty, and vigorous.

#### IV CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF DRYDEN'S LIFE.

- 1631 (? 1632). Dryden born at Aldwinkle, near Oundle (August 9th).
- 1642 (about). Sent to Westminster School.
- 1649. Verses on the Death of Lord Hastings in the "Lachrymæ Musarum."
- 1650. Entered at Trinity College, Cambridge.
- 1654. Takes his B.A. degree. He probably soon after came to London.
- 1659. "Heroic Stanzas" on the death of Cromwell published.
- 1660. "Astræa Redux" published.
- 1661. "Panegyric on the Coronation" published.
- 1662. Dryden elected a Member of the Royal Society.
- 1663. "The Wild Gallant" acted (Feb.).  
Dryden married the Lady Elizabeth Howard (Dec.).
- 1663-4. "The Rival Ladies" acted.
- 1664-5. "The Indian Emperor" acted.  
"Annus Mirabilis" published (Jan.).
- 1666. Charles Dryden, the poet's eldest son, born.
- 1667. "Secret Love, or the Maiden Queen" acted (March).  
"Sir Martin Marall" acted (August).  
"The Tempest" (with Davenant) acted (Nov.).

- 1668. "An Evening's Love, or the Mock Astrologer" acted (June).
- 1669. "Tyrannic Love, or the Royal Martyr" acted.
- 1670. Dryden became Poet Laureate (Aug.).  
"Conquest of Granada" (two parts) acted.
- 1671. The Duke of Buckingham's "Rehearsal" acted (Dec.)
- 1672. "Essay on the Dramatic Poetry of the Last Age."  
"Essay on Heroic Plays" published (with the  
"Conquest of Granada").  
"Marriage à la Mode" acted.  
"The Assignment, or Love in a Nunnery" acted.
- 1673. "Amboyna" acted.
- 1674. "The State of Innocence" published (not acted).
- 1675. "Aurengzebe" acted.
- 1677-8. "All for Love" acted.
- 1678. "The Kind Keeper, or Mr. Limberham" acted.
- 1679. "Œdipus" (written with Lee) acted.  
"Troilus and Cressida" acted (April).  
Dryden waylaid and beaten in Rose Alley (Dec.  
18th).
- 1681. "Absalom and Achitophel" (Part I.) published.  
"The Spanish Friar" acted.
- 1682. "The Medal" published (March).  
"Mac Flecknoe" published (Oct.).  
"Absalom and Achitophel" (Part II., written with  
Tate) published (Nov.).  
"Religio Laici" (Nov.).  
"The Duke of Guise" (written with Lee) acted.
- 1684. Edited "Miscellany Poems" (first series).  
Translation of Maimbourg's "History of the  
League" published.
- 1685. "Albion and Albanus" acted.  
"Threnodia Augustalis" published.  
Second volume of "Miscellany Poems" ("Sylvæ").



1686. Dryden became a Roman Catholic.  
1687 "Hind and Panther" published.  
1688. Translation of Life of "St. Francis Xavier" published.  
"Britannia Rediviva" published.  
1690. "Don Sebastian" acted.  
"Amphitryon" acted.  
1691. "King Arthur" acted.  
1692. "Eleonora" published.  
"Cleomenes" acted.  
1693. Translation of Juvenal and Persius (by Dryden and others) published with Dryden's "Essay on Satire."  
"Examen Poeticæ" (the third volume of the "Miscellany Poems") published.  
"Love Triumphant" acted.  
1695. Translation of Dufresnoy's "Art of Painting" published.  
1697 Translation of Virgil published.  
"Alexander's Feast" published (Nov.).  
1700. "Fables" published.  
Dryden died (May 1st).

## V BOOKS RECOMMENDED.

Christie, "Dryden's Poetical Works" (Globe edition).

Hooper, "Dryden's Poetical Works" (Aldine edition).

Yonge, "Essays of Dryden."

Morley, "Discourses on Satire and Epic Poetry" (Cassell's National Library).

Scott, "Dryden's Complete Works" (18 vols). Of this a new edition has been published under the superintendence of Mr. G. Saintsbury.

Scott, "Life of Dryden." (In his edition of Dryden;

but frequently reprinted in collections of Scott's miscellaneous works.)

Malone, "Life of Dryden," vol. i. of his edition of Dryden's "Prose Works."

Saintsbury, "Dryden" (English Men of Letters series).

Leslie Stephen, article "Dryden, John," in the "Dictionary of National Biography," vol. 16.

Johnson's "Lives of the Poets," edited by Mrs. Napier ; or Cunningham's edition (out of print).



## DRYDEN

OF the great poet whose life I am about to delineate, the curiosity which his reputation must excite, will require a display more ample than can now be given. His contemporaries, however they revered his genius, left his life unwritten; and nothing therefore can be known beyond what casual mention and uncertain tradition have supplied.

JOHN DRYDEN was born August 9, 1631, at Aldwincle near Oundle, the son of Erasmus Dryden of Tichmersh; who was the third son of Sir Erasmus Dryden, Baronet, of 10 Canons Ashby. All these places are in Northamptonshire; but the original stock of the family was in the county of Huntingdon.

He is reported by his last biographer, Derrick, to have inherited from his father an estate of two hundred a year, and to have been bred, as was said, an Anabaptist. For either of these particulars no authority is given. Such a fortune ought to have secured him from that poverty which seems always to have oppressed him; or if he had wasted it, to have made him ashamed of publishing his necessities. 20 But though he had many enemies, who undoubtedly examined his life with a scrutiny sufficiently malicious, I do not remember that he is ever charged with waste of his patrimony. He was indeed sometimes reproached for his first religion. I am therefore inclined to believe that Derrick's intelligence was partly true, and partly erroneous.

From Westminster School, where he was instructed as one of the king's scholars by Dr. Busby, whom he long after continued to reverence, he was in 1650 elected to one of the Westminster scholarships at Cambridge.

Of his school performances has appeared only a poem on the death of Lord Hastings, composed with great ambition of such conceits as, notwithstanding the reformation begun by Waller and Denham, the example of Cowley still kept in reputation. Lord Hastings died of the small-pox, 10 and his poet has made of the pustules first rosebuds, and then gems; at last exalts them into stars; and says,

“No comet need foretell his change drew on,  
Whose corps might seem a constellation.”

At the university he does not appear to have been eager of poetical distinction, or to have lavished his early wit either on fictitious subjects or public occasions. He probably considered that he who purposed to be an author ought first to be a student. He obtained, whatever was the reason, no fellowship in the College. Why he was 20 excluded cannot now be known, and it is vain to guess; had he thought himself injured, he knew how to complain. In the *Life of Plutarch* he mentions his education in the College with gratitude; but in a prologue at Oxford, he has these lines:

“Oxford to him a dearer name shall be  
Than his own mother-university;  
Thebes did his rude unknowing youth engage;  
He chooses Athens in his riper age.”

It was not till the death of Cromwell, in 1658, that he 30 became a public candidate for fame, by publishing “*Heroic Stanzas on the late Lord Protector*,” which, compared with the verses of Sprat and Waller on the same occasion, were sufficient to raise great expectations of the rising poet.

When the king was restored, Dryden, like the other panegyrists of usurpation, changed his opinion, or his profession, and published "*Astrea Redux*, a poem on the happy restoration and return of his most sacred Majesty King Charles the Second."

The reproach of inconstancy was, on this occasion, shared with such numbers, that it produced neither hatred nor disgrace; if he changed, he changed with the nation. It was, however, not totally forgotten when his reputation raised him enemies. 10

The same year he praised the new king in a second poem on his restoration. In the "*Astrea*" was the line,

"An horrid *stillness* first *invades* the ear,  
And in that silence we a tempest fear,"

for which he was persecuted with perpetual ridicule, perhaps with more than was deserved. *Silence* is indeed mere privation; and, so considered, cannot *invade*; but privation likewise certainly is *darkness*, and probably *cold*; yet poetry has never been refused the right of ascribing effects or agency to them as to positive powers. No man scruples to 20 say that *darkness* hinders him from his work; or that *cold* has killed the plants. Death is also privation, yet who has made any difficulty of assigning to Death a dart and the power of striking?

In settling the order of his works, there is some difficulty; for, even when they are important enough to be formally offered to a patron, he does not commonly date his dedication; the time of writing and publishing is not always the same; nor can the first editions be easily found, if even from them could be obtained the necessary infor- 30 mation.

The time at which his first play was exhibited is not certainly known, because it was not printed till it was some years afterwards altered and revived; but since the

plays are said to be printed in the order in which they were written, from the dates of some, those of others may be inferred; and thus it may be collected that in 1663, in the thirty-second year of his life, he commenced a writer for the stage; compelled undoubtedly by necessity, for he appears never to have loved that exercise of his genius, or to have much pleased himself with his own dramas.

Of the stage, when he had once invaded it, he kept possession for many years; not indeed without the competition  
10 of rivals who sometimes prevailed, or the censure of criticks, which was often poignant and often just; but with such a degree of reputation as made him at least secure of being heard, whatever might be the final determination of the public.

His first piece was a comedy called the "Wild Gallant." He began with no happy auguries; for his performance was so much disapproved, that he was compelled to recall it, and change it from its imperfect state to the form in which it now appears, and which is yet sufficiently defective  
20 to vindicate the criticks.

I wish that there were no necessity of following the progress of his theatrical fame, or tracing the meanders of his mind through the whole series of his dramattick performances; it will be fit however to enumerate them, and to take especial notice of those that are distinguished by any peculiarity intrinsick or concomitant; for the composition and fate of eight and twenty dramas include too much of a poetical life to be omitted.

In 1664 he published the "Rival Ladies," which he  
30 dedicated to the Earl of Orrery, a man of high reputation both as a writer and a statesman. In this play he made his essay of dramattick rhyme, which he defends in his dedication, with sufficient certainty of a favourable hearing; for Orrery was himself a writer of rhyming tragedies.

He then joined with Sir Robert Howard in the "Indian

Queen," a tragedy in rhyme. The parts which either of them wrote are not distinguished.

The "Indian Emperor" was published in 1667. It is a tragedy in rhyme, intended for a sequel to Howard's "Indian Queen." Of this connection notice was given to the audience by printed bills, distributed at the door; an expedient supposed to be ridiculed in the "Rehearsal," when Bayes tells how many reams he has printed, to instill into the audience some conception of his plot.

In this play is the description of Night, which Rymer<sup>10</sup> has made famous by preferring it to those of all other poets.

The practice of making tragedies in rhyme was introduced soon after the Restoration, as it seems, by the earl of Orrery, in compliance with the opinion of Charles the Second, who had formed his taste by the French theatre; and Dryden, who wrote, and made no difficulty of declaring that he wrote, only to please, and who perhaps knew that by his dexterity of versification he was more likely to excel others in rhyme than without it, very readily adopted his<sup>20</sup> master's preference. He therefore made rhyming tragedies, till, by the prevalence of manifest propriety, he seems to have grown ashamed of making them any longer.

To this play is prefixed a very vehement defence of dramattick rhyme, in confutation of the preface to the "Duke of Lerma," in which Sir Robert Howard had censured it.

In 1667, he published "Annus Mirabilis," the "Year of Wonders," which may be esteemed one of his most elaborate works.

It is addressed to Sir Robert Howard by a letter, which is not properly a dedication; and, writing to a poet, he has interspersed many critical observations, of which some are common, and some perhaps ventured without much consideration. He began, even now, to exercise the domi-



nation of conscious genius, by recommending his own performance: "I am satisfied that as the Prince and General [Rupert and Monk] are incomparably the best subjects I ever had, so what I have written on them is much better than what I have performed on any other. As I have endeavoured to adorn my poem with noble thoughts, so much more to express those thoughts with elocution."

It is written in quatrains, or heroick stanzas of four lines; a measure which he had learned from the "Gondibert" of Davenant, and which he then thought the most majestic that the English language affords. Of this stanza he mentions the encumbrances, encreased as they were by the exactness which the age required! It was, throughout his life, very much his custom to recommend his works, by representation of the difficulties that he had encountered, without appearing to have sufficiently considered, that where there is no difficulty there is no praise.

There seems to be in the conduct of Sir Robert Howard and Dryden towards each other, something that is not now easily to be explained. Dryden, in his dedication to the earl of Orrery, had defended dramatick rhyme; and Howard, in the preface to a collection of plays, had censured his opinion. Dryden vindicated himself in his "Dialogue on Dramatick Poetry;" Howard, in his Preface to the "Duke of Lerma," animadverted on the Vindication; and Dryden, in a Preface to the "Indian Emperor," replied to the Animadversions with great asperity, and almost with contumely. The dedication to this play is dated the year in which the "Annus Mirabilis" was published. Here appears a strange inconsistency; but Langbaine affords some help, by relating that the answer to Howard was not published in the first edition of the play, but was added when it was afterwards reprinted; and as the "Duke of Lerma" did not appear till 1668,

the same year, in which the Dialogue was published, there was time enough for enmity to grow up between authors, who, writing both for the theatre, were naturally rivals.

He was now so much distinguished, that in 1668 he succeeded Sir William Davenant as poet-laureat. The salary of the laureat had been raised in favour of Jonson, by Charles the First, from an hundred marks to one hundred pounds a year, and a tierce of wine; a revenue in those days not inadequate to the conveniencies of life.

The same year he published his *Essay on Dramatick Poetry*, an elegant and instructive dialogue; in which we are told by Prior, that the principal character is meant to represent the duke of Dorset. This work seems to have given Addison a model for his *Dialogues upon Medals*.

"*Secret Love, or the Maiden Queen*," is a tragi-comedy. In the preface he discusses a curious question, whether a poet can judge well of his own productions: and determines very justly, that, of the plan and disposition, and all that can be reduced to principles of science, the author may depend upon his own opinion; but that, in those parts where fancy predominates, self-love may easily deceive. He might have observed, that what is good only because it pleases, cannot be pronounced good till it has been found to please.

"*Sir Martin Marall*" is a comedy, published without preface or dedication, and at first without the name of the author. Langbaine charges it, like most of the rest, with plagiarism; and observes that the song is translated from *Voiture*, allowing however that both the sense and measure are exactly observed.

"*The Tempest*" is an alteration of Shakspeare's play, made by Dryden in conjunction with Davenant, "whom," says he, "I found of so quick a fancy, that nothing was proposed to him in which he could not suddenly produce

a thought extremely pleasant and surprising; and those first thoughts of his, contrary to the Latin proverb, were not always the least happy; and as his fancy was quick, so likewise were the products of it remote and new. He borrowed not of any other, and his imaginations were such as could not easily enter into any other man."

The effect produced by the conjunction of these two powerful minds was, that to Shakspeare's monster Caliban is added a sister-monster Sicorax; and a woman, who, in  
10 the original play, had never seen a man, is in this brought acquainted with a man that had never seen a woman.

About this time, in 1673, Dryden seems to have had his quiet much disturbed by the success of the "Empress of Morocco," a tragedy written in rhyme by *Elkanah Settle*; which was so much applauded, as to make him think his supremacy of reputation in some danger. Settle had not only been prosperous on the stage, but, in the confidence of success, had published his play, with sculptures and a preface of defiance. Here was one offence added to another;  
20 and, for the last blast of inflammation, it was acted at Whitehall by the court-ladies.

Dryden could not now repress these emotions, which he called indignation, and others jealousy; but wrote upon the play and the dedication such criticism as malignant impatience could pour out in haste.

Of Settle he gives this character. "He's an animal of a most deplored understanding, without conversation. His being is in a twilight of sense, and some glimmering of thought, which he can never fashion into wit or English.  
30 His style is boisterous and rough-hewn, his rhyme incorrigibly lewd, and his numbers perpetually harsh and ill-sounding. The little talent which he has, is fancy. He sometimes labours with a thought; but, with the pudder he makes to bring it into the world, 'tis commonly still-born; so that, for want of learning and elocution, he will

never be able to express any thing either naturally or justly!"

This is not very decent; yet this is one of the pages in which criticism prevails most over brutal fury. He proceeds: "He has a heavy hand at fools, and a great felicity in writing nonsense for them. Fools they will be in spite of him. His King, his two Empresses, his villain, and his sub-villain, nay his hero, have all a certain natural cast of the father—their folly was born and bred in them, and something of the Elkanah will be visible." 10

This is Dryden's general declamation; I will not withhold from the reader a particular remark. Having gone through the first act, he says, "To conclude this act with the most rumbling piece of nonsense spoken yet,

"To flattering lightning our feign'd smiles conform,  
Which back'd with thunder do but gild a storm."

"Conform a smile to lightning, make a smile imitate lightning, and flattering lightning: lightning sure is a threatening thing. And this lightning must gild a storm. Now if I must conform my smiles to lightning, then my smiles 20 must gild a storm too: to gild with smiles is a new invention of gilding. And gild a storm by being backed with thunder. Thunder is part of the storm; so one part of the storm must help to gild another part, and help by backing; as if a man would gild a thing the better for being backed, or having a load upon his back. So that here is gilding by conforming, smiling, lightning, backing, and thundering. The whole is as if I should say thus, I will make my counterfeit smiles look like a flattering stone-horse, which, being backed with a trooper, does but gild 30 the battle. I am mistaken if nonsense is not here pretty thick sown. Sure the poet writ these two lines aboard some smack in a storm, and, being sea-sick, spewed up a good lump of clotted nonsense at once."

Here is perhaps a sufficient specimen ; but as the pamphlet, though Dryden's, has never been thought worthy of republication, and is not easily to be found, it may gratify curiosity to quote it more largely.

“ Whene'er she bleeds,  
He no severer a damnation needs,  
That dares pronounce the sentence of her death,  
Than the infection that attends that breath.”

“ *That attends that breath.*—The poet is at *breath* again ;  
10 *breath* can never 'scape him ; and here he brings in a *breath*  
that must be *infectious* with *pronouncing* a sentence ; and  
this sentence is not to be pronounced till the condemned  
party *bleeds* ; that is, she must be executed first, and sen-  
tenced after ; and the *pronouncing* of this *sentence* will be  
infectious ; that is, others will catch the disease of that  
sentence, and this infecting of others will torment a man's  
self. The whole is thus ; *when she bleeds, thou needest no*  
*greater hell or torment to thyself, than infecting of others by*  
*pronouncing a sentence upon her.* What hodge-podge does  
20 he make here ! Never was Dutch grout such clogging,  
thick, indigestible stuff. But this is but a taste to stay the  
stomach ; we shall have a more plentiful mess presently.

“ Now to dish up the poet's broth, that I promised :

“ For when we're dead, and our freed souls enlarg'd,  
Of nature's grosser burden we're discharg'd,  
Then gently, as a happy lover's sigh,  
Like wandering meteors through the air we'll fly,  
And in our airy walk, as subtle guests,  
We'll steal into our cruel fathers breasts,  
30 There read their souls, and track each passion's sphere :  
See how Revenge moves there, Ambition here.  
And in their orbs view the dark characters  
Of sieges, ruins, murders, blood and wars.  
We'll blot out all those hideous draughts, and write  
Pure and white forms ; then with a radiant light  
Their breasts encircle, till their passions be  
Gentle as nature in its infancy :

Till soften'd by our charms their furies cease,  
And their revenge resolves into a peace.  
Thus by our death their quarrel ends,  
Whom living we made foes, dead we'll make friends.'

"If this be not a very liberal mess, I will refer myself to the stomach of any moderate guest. And a rare mess it is, far excelling any Westminster white-broth. It is a kind of gibblet porridge, made of the gibblets of a couple of young geese, stodged full of *meteors, orbs, spheres, track, hideous draughts, dark characters, white forms, and radiant* 10 *lights*, designed not only to please appetite, and indulge luxury; but it is also physical, being an approved medicine to purge choler: for it is propounded by Morena, as a receipt to cure their fathers of their choleric humours: and were it written in characters as barbarous as the words, might very well pass for a doctor's bill. To conclude, it is porridge, 'tis a receipt, 'tis a pig with a pudding in the belly, 'tis I know not what: for, certainly, never any one that pretended to write sense, had the impudence before to 20 put such stuff as this into the mouths of those that were to speak it before an audience, whom he did not take to be all fools; and after that to print it too, and expose it to the examination of the world. But let us see, what we can make of this stuff:

" 'For when we're dead, and our freed souls enlarged—'

"Here he tells us what it is to be *dead*; it is to have *our freed souls set free*. Now if to have a soul set free is to be dead, then to have a *freed soul* set free, is to have a dead man die.

" 'Then gentle, as a happy lover's sigh—'

30

"They two like one *sigh*, and that one *sigh* like two wandering meteors,

" 'shall flie through the air—'

“That is, they shall mount above like falling stars, or else they shall skip like two Jacks with lanthorns, or Will with a wisp, and Madge with a candle.”

*And in their airy walk steal into their cruel fathers breasts, like subtle guests.* So “that their fathers breasts must be in an *airy walk*, an *airy walk* of a *flier*. *And there they will read their souls, and track the spheres of their passions.* That is, these walking fliers, Jack with a lanthorn, &c. will put on his spectacles, and fall a *reading souls*, and put on his  
 10 pumps and fall a *tracking of spheres*; so that he will read and run, walk and fly at the same time! Oh! Nimble Jack. *Then he will see, how revenge here, how ambition there—* The birds will hop about. *And then view the dark characters of sieges, ruins, murders, blood, and wars, in their orbs: Track the characters to their forms!* Oh! rare sport for Jack. Never was place so full of game as these breasts! You cannot stir but flush a sphere, start a character, or un-kennel an orb!”

Settle's is said to have been the first play embellished  
 20 with sculptures; those ornaments seem to have given poor Dryden great disturbance. He tries however to ease his pain, by venting his malice in a parody.

“The poet has not only been so impudent to expose all this stuff, but so arrogant to defend it with an epistle; like a saucy booth-keeper, that, when he had put a cheat upon the people, would wrangle and fight with any that would not like it, or would offer to discover it; for which arrogance our poet receives this correction; and to jerk him a little the sharper, I will not transpose his verse, but by the  
 30 help of his own words trans-non-sense sense, that, by my stuff, people may judge the better what his is:

“ ‘Great Boy, thy tragedy and sculptures done  
 From press, and plates in fleets do homeward come:  
 And in ridiculous and humble pride,  
 Their course in ballad-singers baskets guide,

Whose greasy twigs do all new beauties take,  
 From the gay shews thy dainty sculptures make.  
 Thy lines a mess of rhiming nonsense yield,  
 A senseless tale, with flattering fustian fill'd.  
 No grain of sense does in one line appear,  
 Thy words big bulks of boisterous bombast bear.  
 With noise they move, and from players mouths rebound,  
 When their tongues dance to thy words empty sound.  
 By thee inspir'd the rumbling verses roll,  
 As if that rhyme and bombast lent a soul : 10  
 And with that soul they seem taught duty too,  
 To huffing words does humble nonsense bow,  
 As if it would thy worthless worth enhance,  
 To th' lowest rank of fops thy praise advance ;  
 To whom, by instinct, all thy stuff is dear ;  
 Their loud claps echo to the theatre.  
 From breaths of fools thy commendation spreads,  
 Fame sings thy praise with mouths of loggerheads.  
 With noise and laughing each thy fustian greets,  
 'Tis clapt by quires of empty-headed cits, 20  
 Who have their tribute sent, and homage given,  
 As men in whispers send loud noise to heaven.'

"Thus I have daubed him with his own puddle: and now we are come from aboard his dancing, masking, rebounding, breathing fleet; and as if we had landed at Gotham, we meet nothing but fools and nonsense."

Such was the criticism to which the genius of Dryden could be reduced, between rage and terrour; rage with little provocation, and terrour with little danger. To see the highest minds thus levelled with the meanest, may produce 30 some solace to the consciousness of weakness, and some mortification to the pride of wisdom. But let it be remembered, that minds are not levelled in their powers but when they are first levelled in their desires. Dryden and Settle had both placed their happiness in the claps of multitudes.

The "Mock Astrologer," a comedy, is dedicated to the illustrious duke of Newcastle, whom he courts by adding



to his praises those of his lady, not only as a lover but a partner of his studies. It is displeasing to think how many names, once celebrated, are since forgotten. Of Newcastle's works nothing is now known but his treatise on horsemanship.

The Preface seems very elaborately written, and contains many just remarks on the Fathers of the English drama. Shakspeare's plots, he says, are in the hundred novels of *Cinthio*; those of Beaumont and Fletcher in Spanish  
10 Stories; Jonson only made them for himself. His criticisms upon tragedy, comedy, and farce, are judicious and profound. He endeavours to defend the immorality of some of his comedies by the example of former writers; which is only to say, that he was not the first nor perhaps the greatest offender. Against those that accused him of plagiarism, he alleges a favourable expression of the king: "He only desired that they, who accuse me of thefts, would steal him plays like mine;" and then relates how much labour he spends in fitting for the English stage what  
20 he borrows from others.

"Tyrannic Love, or the Virgin Martyr," was another tragedy in rhyme, conspicuous for many passages of strength and elegance, and many of empty noise and ridiculous turbulence. The rants of Maximin have been always the sport of criticism; and were at length, if his own confession may be trusted, the shame of the writer.

Of this play he takes care to let the reader know, that it was contrived and written in seven weeks. Want of time was often his excuse, or perhaps shortness of time was his  
30 private boast in the form of an apology.

It was written before the "Conquest of Granada," but published after it. The design is to recommend piety. "I considered that pleasure was not the only end of poesy, and that even the instructions of morality were not so wholly the business of a poet, as that precepts and examples

of piety were to be omitted ; for to leave that employment altogether to the clergy, were to forget that religion was first taught in verse, which the laziness or dulness of succeeding priesthood turned afterwards into prose." Thus foolishly could Dryden write, rather than not shew his malice to the parsons.

The two parts of the "Conquest of Granada" are written with a seeming determination to glut the public with dramattick wonders ; to exhibit in its highest elevation a theatrical meteor of incredible love and impos- 10 sible valour, and to leave no room for a wilder flight to the extravagance of posterity. All the rays of romantick heat, whether amorous or warlike, glow in Almanzor by a kind of concentration. He is above all laws ; he is exempt from all restraints ; he ranges the world at will, and governs wherever he appears. He fights without enquiring the cause, and loves in spite of the obligations of justice, of rejection by his mistress, and of prohibition from the dead. Yet the scenes are, for the most part, delightful ; they exhibit a kind of illustrious depravity, and majestick madness: 20 such as, if it is sometimes despised, is often revered, and in which the ridiculous is mingled with the astonishing.

In the Epilogue to the second part of the "Conquest of Granada," Dryden indulges his favourite pleasure of discrediting his predecessors ; and this Epilogue he has defended by a long postscript. He had promised a second dialogue, in which he should more fully treat of the virtues and faults of the English poets, who have written in the dramatic, epick, or lyrick way. This promise was never formally performed ; but, with respect to the dramattick 30 writers, he has given us in his prefaces, and in this postscript, something equivalent ; but his purpose being to exalt himself by the comparison, he shews faults distinctly, and only praises excellence in general terms.

A play thus written, in professed defiance of probability,

naturally drew down upon itself the vultures of the theatre. One of the criticks that attacked it was *Martin Clifford*, to whom *Sprat* addressed the "Life of Cowley," with such veneration of his critical powers as might naturally excite great expectations of instruction from his remarks. But let honest credulity beware of receiving characters from contemporary writers. Clifford's remarks, by the favour of Dr. *Percy*, were at last obtained; and, that no man may ever want them more, I will extract enough to satisfy all  
10 reasonable desire.

In the first Letter his observation is only general: "You do live," says he, "in as much ignorance and darkness as you did in the womb: your writings are like a Jack-of-all trades shop; they have a variety, but nothing of value; and if thou art not the dullest plant-animal that ever the earth produced, all that I have conversed with are strangely mistaken in thee."

In the second, he tells him that *Almanzor* is not more copied from Achilles than from Ancient Pistol. "But I  
20 am," says he, "strangely mistaken if I have not seen this very *Almanzor* of yours in some disguise about this town, and passing under another name. Pr'ythee tell me true, was not this Huffleap once the *Indian Emperor*, and at another time did he not call himself *Maximin*? Was not *Lyndarasa* once called *Almeria*? I mean under *Montezuma* the Indian Emperor. I protest and vow they are either the same, or so alike that I cannot, for my heart, distinguish one from the other. You are therefore a strange unconscionable thief; thou art not content to steal from others,  
30 but dost rob thy poor wretched self too."

Now was *Settle's* time to take his revenge. He wrote a vindication of his own lines; and, if he is forced to yield any thing, makes reprisals upon his enemy. To say that his answer is equal to the censure, is no high commendation. To expose Dryden's method of analysing his expres-

sions, he tries the same experiment upon the description of the ships in the *Indian Emperor*, of which however he does not deny the excellence; but intends to shew, that by studied misconstruction every thing may be equally represented as ridiculous. After so much of Dryden's elegant animadversions, justice requires that something of Settle's should be exhibited. The following observations are therefore extracted from a quarto pamphlet of ninety-five pages:

“ ‘Fate after him below with pain did move,  
And victory could scarce keep pace above.’ 10

“ These two lines, if he can shew me any sense or thought in, or any thing but bombast and noise, he shall make me believe every word in his observations on ‘Morocco’ sense.

“ In the ‘Empress of Morocco’ were these lines:

“ ‘I’ll travel then to some remoter sphere,  
Till I find out new worlds, and crown you there.’

“ On which Dryden make this remark:

“ ‘*I believe our learned author takes a sphere for a country: the sphere of Morocco, as if Morocco were the globe of earth and water; but a globe is no sphere neither, by his leave.*’ 20  
&c. So *sphere* must not be sense, unless it relate to a circular motion about a globe, in which sense the astronomers use it. I would desire him to expound those lines in ‘Granada:’

“ ‘I’ll to the turrets of the palace go,  
And add new fire to those that fight below.  
Thence, hero-like, with torches by my side,  
(Far be the omen tho’) my Love I’ll guide.  
No, like his better fortune I’ll appear,  
With open arms, loose vail and flowing hair,  
Just flying forward from my rowling sphere.’ 30

I wonder, if he be so strict, how he dares make so bold with *sphere* himself, and be so critical in other men's writings. Fortune is fancied standing on a globe, not on a *sphere*, as he told us in the first Act.

“Because *Elkanah's* ‘Similes’ are the most unlike things to what they are compared in the world, I’ll venture to start a simile in his ‘*Annus Mirabilis*:’ he gives this poetical description of the ship called the ‘London:’

“ ‘The goodly London in her gallant trim,  
The Phenix-daughter of the vanquisht old,  
Like a rich bride does to the ocean swim,  
And on her shadow rides in floating gold.

10 Her flag aloft spread ruffling in the wind,  
And sanguine streamers seem’d the flood to fire :  
The weaver, charm’d with what his loom design’d,  
Goes on to sea, and knows not to retire.

With roomy decks, her guns of mighty strength,  
Whose low-laid mouths each mounting billow laves,  
Deep in her draught, and warlike in her length,  
She seems a sea-wasp flying on the waves.’

“What a wonderful pother is here, to make all these poetical beautifications of a ship! that is, a *phenix* in the first  
20 stanza, and but a *wasp* in the last: nay, to make his humble comparison of a *wasp* more ridiculous, he does not say it flies upon the waves as nimbly as a wasp, or the like, but it seemed a *wasp*. But our author at the writing of this was not in his altitudes, to compare ships to floating palaces; a comparison to the purpose, was a perfection he did not arrive to, till his ‘Indian Emperor’s’ days. But perhaps his similitude has more in it than we imagine; this ship had a great many guns in her, and they, put all together, made the sting in the wasp’s tail: for this is all  
30 the reason I can guess, why it seem’d a *wasp*. But, because we will allow him all we can to help out, let it be a *phenix sea-wasp*, and the rarity of such an animal may do much towards the heightening the fancy.

“It had been much more to his purpose, if he had designed to render the senseless play little, to have searched for some such pedantry as this :

“ ‘Two ifs scarce make one possibility.

If justice will take all and nothing give,  
Justice, methinks, is not distributive.

To die or kill you, is the alternative,  
Rather than take your life, I will not live.’

“Observe, how prettily our author chops logick in heroick verse. Three such fustian canting words as *distributive*, *alternative*, and *two ifs*, no man but himself would have come within the noise of. But he’s a man of general learning, and all comes into his play. 10

“ ’Twould have done well too, if he could have met with a rant or two, worth the observation : such as,

“ ‘Move swiftly, Sun, and fly a lover’s pace,  
Leave months and weeks behind thee in thy race.’

“But surely the Sun, whether he flies a lover’s or not a lover’s pace, leaves weeks and months, nay years too, behind him in his race.

“Poor Robin, or any other of the Philomathematicks, would have given him satisfaction in the point.

“ ‘If I could kill thee now, thy fate’s so low,  
That I must stoop, ere I can give the blow.  
But mine is fixt so far above thy crown,  
That all thy men,  
Piled on thy back, can never pull it down.’ 20

“Now where that is, Almanzor’s fate is fixt, I cannot guess ; but wherever it is, I believe Almanzor, and think that all Abdalla’s subjects, piled upon one another, might not pull down his fate so well as without piling : besides, I think Abdalla so wise a man, that if Almanzor had told him piling his men upon his back might do the feat, he 30 would scarce bear such a weight, for the pleasure of the exploit ; but it is a huff, and let Abdalla do it if he dare.

“ ‘The people like a headlong torrent go,  
And every dam they break or overflow.

But, unoppos'd, they either lose their force,  
Or wind in volumes to their former course.'

"A very pretty allusion, contrary to all sense or reason. Torrents, I take it, let them wind never so much, can never return to their former course, unless he can suppose that fountains can go upwards, which is impossible: nay more, in the foregoing page he tells us so too. A trick of a very unfaithful memory,

" 'But can no more than fountains upward flow.'

10 "Which of a *torrent*, which signifies a rapid stream, is much more impossible. Besides, if he goes to quibble, and say that it is possible by art water may be made return, and the same water run twice in one and the same channel: then he quite confutes what he says; for, it is by being opposed, that it runs into its former course: for all engines that make water so return, do it by compulsion and opposition. Or, if he means a headlong torrent for a tide, which would be ridiculous, yet they do not wind in volumes, but come fore-right back (if their upright lies straight to their  
20 former course), and that by opposition of the sea-water, that drives them back again.

"And for fancy, when he lights of any thing like it, 'tis a wonder if it be not borrowed. As here, for example of, I find this fanciful thought in his 'Ann. Mirab.'

" 'Old father Thames raised up his reverend head;  
But feared the fate of Simoeis would return;  
Deep in his ooze he sought his sedgy bed;  
And shrunk his waters back into his urn.'

"This is stolen from Cowley's 'Davideis,' p. 9.

30 " 'Swift Jordan started, and strait backward fled,  
Hiding amongst thick reeds his aged head.  
And when the Spaniards their assault begin,  
At once beat those without and those within.'

“This Almanzor speaks of himself ; and sure for one man to conquer an army within the city, and another without the city, at once, is something difficult ; but this flight is pardonable, to some we meet with in ‘Granada.’ Osmin, speaking of Almanzor :

“ ‘ Who, like a tempest that outrides the wind,  
Made a just battle, ere the bodies joined.’

“Pray what does this honourable person mean by a *tempest that outrides the wind* ! A tempest that outrides itself. To suppose a tempest without wind, is as bad as supposing 10 a man to walk without feet ; for if he supposes the tempest to be something distinct from the wind, yet as being the effect of wind only, to come before the cause is a little preposterous : so that, if he takes it one way, or if he takes it the other, those two *ifs* will scarce make one *possibility*.” Enough of Settle.

“Marriage Alamode” is a comedy, dedicated to the Earl of Rochester ; whom he acknowledges not only as the defender of his poetry, but the promoter of his fortune. Langbaine places this play in 1673. The earl of Rochester 20 therefore was the famous Wilmot, whom yet tradition always represents as an enemy to Dryden, and who is mentioned by him with some disrespect in the preface to “Juvenal.”

“The Assignment, or Love in a Nunnery,” a comedy, was driven off the stage, *against the opinion*, as the author says, *of the best judges*. It is dedicated, in a very elegant address, to Sir Charles Sedley ; in which he finds an opportunity for his usual complaint of hard treatment and unreasonable censure. 30

“Amboyna” is a tissue of mingled dialogue in verse and prose, and was perhaps written in less time than “The Virgin Martyr ;” though the author thought not fit either ostentatiously or mournfully to tell how little labour it



cost him, or at how short a warning he produced it. It was a temporary performance, written in the time of the Dutch war, to inflame the nation against their enemies ; to whom he hopes, as he declares in his Epilogue, to make his poetry not less destructive than that by which Tyrtæus of old animated the Spartans. This play was written in the second Dutch war in 1673.

"Troilus and Cressida," is a play altered from Shakespeare ; but so altered that even in Langbaine's opinion,  
10 *the last scene in the third act is a masterpiece.* It is introduced by a discourse on *the grounds of criticism in tragedy* ; to which I suspect that Rymer's book had given occasion.

The "Spanish Fryar" is a tragi-comedy, eminent for the happy coincidence and coalition of the two plots. As it was written against the Papists, it would naturally at that time have friends and enemies ; and partly by the popularity which it obtained at first, and partly by the real power both of the serious and risible part, it continued  
20 long a favourite of the publick.

It was Dryden's opinion, at least for some time, and he maintains it in the dedication of this play, that the drama required an alternation of comick and tragick scenes, and that it is necessary to mitigate by alleviations of merriment the pressure of ponderous events, and the fatigue of toilsome passions. "Whoever," says he, "cannot perform both parts, *is but half a writer for the stage.*"

The "Duke of Guise," a tragedy written in conjunction with Lee, as "Oedipus" had been before, seems to deserve  
30 notice only for the offence which it gave to the remnant of the Covenanters, and in general to the enemies of the court, who attacked him with great violence, and were answered by him ; though at last he seems to withdraw from the conflict, by transferring the greater part of the blame or merit to his partner. It happened that a con-

tract had been made between them, by which they were to join in writing a play; and *he happened*, says Dryden, *to claim the promise just upon the finishing of a poem, when I would have been glad of a little respite.*—Two thirds of it belonged to him; and to me only the first scene of the play, the whole fourth act, and the first half or somewhat more of the fifth.

This was a play written professedly for the party of the duke of York, whose succession was then opposed. A parallel is intended between the Leaguers of France and 10 the Covenanters of England; and this intention produced the controversy.

“Albion and Albanus” is a musical drama or opera, written, like the “Duke of Guise,” against the Republicans. With what success it was performed I have not found.

“The State of Innocence and Fall of Man” is termed by him an opera: it is rather a tragedy in heroick rhyme, but of which the personages are such as cannot decently be exhibited on the stage. Some such production was foreseen by Marvel, who writes thus to Milton: 20

“Or if a work so infinite be spann’d,  
Jealous I was least some less skilful hand,  
Such as disquiet always what is well,  
And by ill-imitating would excel,  
Might hence presume the whole creation’s day,  
To change in scenes, and show it in a play.”

It is another of his hasty productions; for the heat of his imagination raised it in a month.

This composition is addressed to the princess of Modena, then dutchess of York, in a strain of flattery which dis- 30 graces genius, and which it was wonderful that any man that knew the meaning of his own words, could use without self-detestation. It is an attempt to mingle earth and heaven, by praising human excellence in the language of religion.

The preface contains an apology for heroick verse, and poetick licence; by which is meant not any liberty taken in contracting or extending words, but the use of bold fictions and ambitious figures.

The reason which he gives for printing what was never acted, cannot be overpassed: "I was induced to it in my own defence, many hundred copies of it being dispersed abroad without my knowledge or consent, and every one gathering new faults, it became at length a libel against  
10 me." These copies as they gathered faults were apparently manuscript; and he lived in an age very unlike ours, if many hundred copies of fourteen hundred lines were likely to be transcribed. An author has a right to print his own works, and needs not seek an apology in falsehood; but he that could bear to write the dedication felt no pain in writing the preface.

"Aureng Zebe" is a tragedy founded on the actions of a great prince then reigning, but over nations not likely to employ their criticks upon the transactions of the English  
20 stage. If he had known and disliked his own character, our trade was not in those times secure from his resentment. His country is at such a distance, that the manners might be safely falsified, and the incidents feigned; for remoteness of place is remarked by Racine, to afford the same conveniences to a poet as length of time.

This play is written in rhyme; and has the appearance of being the most elaborate of all the dramas. The personages are imperial; but the dialogue is often domestick, and therefore susceptible of sentiments accommodated to  
30 familiar incidents. The complaint of life is celebrated, and there are many other passages that may be read with pleasure.

This play is addressed to the earl of Mulgrave, afterwards duke of Buckingham, himself, if not a poet, yet a writer of verses, and a critick. In this address Dryden

gave the first hints of his intention to write an epick poem. He mentions his design in terms so obscure, that he seems afraid lest his plan should be purloined, as, he says, happened to him when he told it more plainly in his preface to "Juvenal." "The design," says he, "you know is great, the story English, and neither too near the present times, nor too distant from them."

"All for Love, or the World well lost," a tragedy founded upon the story of "Antony and Cleopatra," he tells us, *is the only play which he wrote for himself*; the 10 rest were given to the people. It is by universal consent accounted the work in which he has admitted the fewest improprieties of style or character; but it has one fault equal to many, though rather moral than critical, that by admitting the romantick omnipotence of Love, he has recommended as laudable and worthy of imitation that conduct which, through all ages, the good have censured as vicious, and the bad despised as foolish.

Of this play the prologue and the epilogue, though written upon the common topicks of malicious and ignorant criticism, and without any particular relation to the characters or incidents of the drama, are deservedly celebrated for their elegance and spriteliness.

"Limberham, or the kind Keeper," is a comedy, which, after the third night, was prohibited as too indecent for the stage. What gave offence, was in the printing, as the author says, altered or omitted. Dryden confesses that its indecency was objected to; but Langbaine, who yet seldom favours him, imputes its expulsion to resentment, because *it so much exposed the keeping part of the town.* 30

"Oedipus" is a tragedy formed by Dryden and Lee, in conjunction, from the works of Sophocles, Seneca, and Corneille. Dryden planned the scenes, and composed the first and third acts.

"Don Sebastian" is commonly esteemed either the first

or second of his dramattick performances. It is too long to be all acted, and has many characters and many incidents; and though it is not without sallies of frantick dignity, and more noise than meaning, yet as it makes approaches to the possibilities of real life, and has some sentiments which leave a strong impression, it continued long to attract attention. Amidst the distresses of princes, and the vicissitudes of empire, are inserted several scenes which the writer intended for comick; but which, I suppose,  
 10 that age did not much commend, and this would not endure. There are, however, passages of excellence universally acknowledged; the dispute and the reconciliation of Dorax and Sebastian has always been admired.

This play was first acted in 1690, after Dryden had for some years discontinued dramattick poetry.

“Amphitryon” is a comedy derived from Plautus and Molière. The dedication is dated Oct. 1690. This play seems to have succeeded at its first appearance; and was, I think, long considered as a very diverting entertainment.

20 “Cleomenes” is a tragedy, only remarkable as it occasioned an incident related in the “Guardian” (No. 45), and allusively mentioned by Dryden in his preface. As he came out from the representation, he was accosted thus by some airy stripling: *Had I been left alone with a young beauty, I would not have spent my time like your Spartan.* That, Sir, said Dryden, *perhaps is true; but give me leave to tell you, that you are no hero.*

“King Arthur” is another opera. It was the last work that Dryden performed for King Charles, who did not live  
 30 to see it exhibited; and it does not seem to have been ever brought upon the stage. In the dedication to the marquis of Halifax, there is a very elegant character of Charles, and a pleasing account of his latter life. When this was first brought upon the stage, news that the duke of Monmouth had landed was told in the theatre, upon which

the company departed, and “Arthur” was exhibited no more.

His last drama was “Love triumphant,” a tragi-comedy. In his dedication to the earl of Salisbury he mentions *the lowness of fortune to which he has voluntarily reduced himself, and of which he has no reason to be ashamed.*

This play appeared in 1694. It is said to have been unsuccessful. The catastrophe, proceeding merely from a change of mind, is confessed by the author to be defective. Thus he began and ended his dramatick labours with ill success. 10

From such a number of theatrical pieces it will be supposed, by most readers, that he must have improved his fortune; at least, that such diligence with such abilities must have set penury at defiance. But in Dryden’s time the drama was very far from that universal approbation which it has now obtained. The playhouse was abhorred by the Puritans, and avoided by those who desired the character of seriousness or decency. A grave lawyer would have debased his dignity, and a young trader would have impaired his credit, by appearing in those mansions of dissolute licentiousness. The profits of the theatre, when so many classes of the people were deducted from the audience, were not great; and the poet had for a long time but a single night. The first that had two nights was *Southern*, and the first that had three was *Rowe*. There were however, in those days, arts of improving a poet’s profit, which Dryden forbore to practise; and a play therefore seldom produced him more than a hundred pounds, by the accumulated gain of the third night, the dedication, and the copy. 20

Almost every piece had a dedication, written with such elegance and luxuriance of praise, as neither haughtiness nor avarice could be imagined able to resist. But he seems to have made flattery too cheap. That praise is worth nothing of which the price is known. 30

To increase the value of his copies, he often accompanied

his work with a preface of criticism ; a kind of learning then almost new in the English language, and which he, who had considered with great accuracy the principles of writing, was able to distribute copiously as occasions arose. By these dissertations the publick judgment must have been much improved ; and Swift, who conversed with Dryden, relates that he regretted the success of his own instructions, and found his readers made suddenly too skilful to be easily satisfied.

- 10 His prologues had such reputation, that for some time a play was considered as less likely to be well received, if some of his verses did not introduce it. The price of a prologue was two guineas, till being asked to write one for Mr. Southern, he demanded three ; *Not*, said he, *young man, out of disrespect to you, but the players have had my goods too cheap.*

Though he declares, that in his own opinion his genius was not dramatick, he had great confidence in his own fertility ; for he is said to have engaged, by contract, to  
20 furnish four plays a year.

It is certain that in one year, 1678, he published “ All for Love,” “ Assignation,” two parts of the “ Conquest of Granada,” “ Sir Martin Marall,” and the “ State of Innocence,” six complete plays ; with a celerity of performance, which, though all Langbaine’s charges of plagiarism should be allowed, shews such facility of composition, such readiness of language, and such copiousness of sentiment, as, since the time of Lopez de Vega, perhaps no other author has possessed.

- 30 He did not enjoy his reputation, however great, nor his profits, however small, without molestation. He had criticks to endure, and rivals to oppose. The two most distinguished wits of the nobility, the duke of Buckingham and earl of Rochester, declared themselves his enemies.

Buckingham characterised him in 1671, by the name of

*Bayes* in the "Rehearsal;" a farce which he is said to have written with the assistance of Butler the author of "*Hudibras*," Martin Clifford of the Charterhouse, and Dr. Sprat, the friend of Cowley, then his chaplain. Dryden and his friends laughed at the length of time, and the number of hands employed upon this performance; in which, though by some artifice of action, it yet keeps possession of the stage, it is not possible now to find any thing that might not have been written without so long delay, or a confederacy so numerous. 10

To adjust the minute events of literary history, is tedious and troublesome; it requires indeed no great force of understanding, but often depends upon enquiries which there is no opportunity of making, or is to be fetched from books and pamphlets not always at hand.

The "Rehearsal" was played in 1671, and yet is represented as ridiculing passages in the "Conquest of Granada" and "Assignation," which were not published till 1678, in "*Marriage Alamode*" published in 1673, and in "*Tyrannick Love*" of 1677. These contradictions shew how rashly 20 satire is applied.

It is said that this farce was originally intended against Davenant, who in the first draught was characterised by the name of *Bilboa*. Davenant had been a soldier and an adventurer.

There is one passage in the "Rehearsal" still remaining, which seems to have related originally to Davenant. *Bayes* hurts his nose, and comes in with brown paper applied to the bruise; how this affected Dryden, does not appear. Davenant's nose had suffered such diminution by mishaps 30 among the women, that a patch upon that part evidently denoted him.

It is said likewise that Sir Robert Howard was once meant. The design was probably to ridicule the reigning poet, whoever he might be.



Much of the personal satire, to which it might owe its first reception, is now lost or obscured. *Bayes* probably imitated the dress, and mimicked the manner of Dryden; the cant words which are so often in his mouth may be supposed to have been Dryden's habitual phrases, or customary exclamations. *Bayes*, when he is to write, is blooded and purged: this, as Lamotte relates himself to have heard, was the real practice of the poet.

There were other strokes in the "Rehearsal" by which  
10 malice was gratified: the debate between Love and Honour, which keeps prince *Volscius* in a single boot, is said to have alluded to the misconduct of the duke of Ormond, who lost Dublin to the rebels while he was toying with a mistress.

The earl of Rochester, to suppress the reputation of Dryden, took Settle into his protection, and endeavoured to persuade the publick that its approbation had been to that time misplaced. Settle was a while in high reputation: his  
20 "Empress of Morocco," having first delighted the town, was carried in triumph to Whitehall, and played by the ladies of the court. Now was the poetical meteor at the highest; the next moment began its fall. Rochester withdrew his patronage; seeming resolved, says one of his biographers, *to have a judgement contrary to that of the town*. Perhaps being unable to endure any reputation beyond a certain height, even when he had himself contributed to raise it.

Neither criticks nor rivals did Dryden much mischief, unless they gained from his own temper the power of vex-  
30 ing him, which his frequent bursts of resentment give reason to suspect. He is always angry at some past, or afraid of some future censure; but he lessens the smart of his wounds by the balm of his own approbation, and endeavours to repel the shafts of criticism by opposing a shield of adamant confidence.

The perpetual accusation produced against him, was that of plagiarism, against which he never attempted any vigorous defence; for, though he was perhaps sometimes injuriously censured, he would by denying part of the charge have confessed the rest; and as his adversaries had the proof in their own hands, he, who knew that wit had little power against facts, wisely left in that perplexity which generality produces a question which it was his interest to suppress, and which, unless provoked by vindication, few were likely to examine.

10

Though the life of a writer, from about thirty-five to sixty-three, may be supposed to have been sufficiently busied by the composition of eight and twenty pieces for the stage, Dryden found room in the same space for many other undertakings.

But, how much soever he wrote, he was at least once suspected of writing more; for in 1679 a paper of verses, called "an Essay on Satire," was shewn about in manuscript, by which the earl of Rochester, the dutchess of Portsmouth, and others, were so much provoked, that, as was supposed, for the actors were never discovered, they procured Dryden, whom they suspected as the author, to be waylaid and beaten. This incident is mentioned by the duke of Buckinghamshire, the true writer, in his "Art of Poetry;" where he says of Dryden,

"Though prais'd and beaten for another's rhymes,  
His own deserves as great applause sometimes."

His reputation in time was such, that his name was thought necessary to the success of every poetical or literary performance, and therefore he was engaged to contribute something, whatever it might be, to many publications. He prefixed the "Life of Polybius" to the translation of Sir Henry Sheers; and those of Lucian and Plutarch to versions of their works by different hands.

30

Of the English "Tacitus" he translated the first book ; and, if Gordon be credited, translated it from the French. Such a charge can hardly be mentioned without some degree of indignation ; but it is not, I suppose, so much to be inferred that Dryden wanted the literature necessary to the perusal of "Tacitus," as that, considering himself as hidden in a crowd, he had no awe of the publick ; and writing merely for money, was contented to get it by the nearest way.

10 In 1680, the "Epistles of Ovid" being translated by the poets of the time, among which one was the work of Dryden, and another of Dryden and Lord Mulgrave, it was necessary to introduce them by a preface ; and Dryden, who on such occasions was regularly summoned, prefixed a discourse upon translation, which was then struggling for the liberty that it now enjoys. Why it should find any difficulty in breaking the shackles of verbal interpretation, which must for ever debar it from elegance, it would be  
20 difficult to conjecture, were not the power of prejudice every day observed. The authority of Jonson, Sandys, and Holiday, had fixed the judgement of the nation ; and it was not easily believed that a better way could be found than they had taken, though Fanshaw, Denham, Waller, and Cowley, had tried to give examples of a different practice.

In 1681, Dryden became yet more conspicuous by uniting politicks with poetry, in the memorable satire called "Absalom and Achitophel," written against the faction which, by lord Shaftesbury's incitement, set the duke of  
30 Monmouth at its head.

Of this poem, in which personal satire was applied to the support of publick principles, and in which therefore every mind was interested, the reception was eager, and the sale so large, that my father, an old bookseller, told me, he had not known it equalled but by *Sacheverell's* trial.

The reason of this general perusal Addison has attempted to derive from the delight which the mind feels in the investigation of secrets ; and thinks that curiosity to decypher the names procured readers to the poem. There is no need to enquire why those verses were read, which, to all the attractions of wit, elegance, and harmony, added the co-operation of all the factious passions, and filled every mind with triumph or resentment.

It could not be supposed that all the provocation given by Dryden would be endured without resistance or reply. 10 Both his person and his party were exposed in their turns to the shafts of satire, which, though neither so well pointed nor perhaps so well aimed, undoubtedly drew blood.

One of these poems is called "Dryden Satire on his Muse ;" ascribed, though, as Pope says, falsely, to *Somers*, who was afterwards Chancellor. The poem, whose soever it was, has much virulence, and some spriteliness. The writer tells all the ill that he can collect both of Dryden and his friends. 20

The poem of "Absalom and Achitopel" had two answers, now both forgotten ; one called "Azaria and Hushai ;" the other "Absalom senior." Of these hostile compositions, Dryden apparently imputes "Absalom senior" to *Settle*, by quoting in his verses against him the second line. "Azaria and Hushai" was, as *Wood* says, imputed to him, though it is somewhat unlikely that he should write twice on the same occasion. This is a difficulty which I cannot remove, for want of a minuter knowledge of poetical transactions. 30

The same year he published the "Medal," of which the subject is a medal struck on lord Shaftesbury's escape from a prosecution, by the *ignoramus* of a grand jury of Londoners.

In both poems he maintains the same principles, and saw

them both attacked by the same antagonist. Elkanah Settle, who had answered "Absalom," appeared with equal courage in opposition to the "Medal," and published an answer called "The Medal Reversed," with so much success in both encounters, that he left the palm doubtful, and divided the suffrages of the nation. Such are the revolutions of fame, or such is the prevalence of fashion, that the man whose works have not yet been thought to deserve the care of collecting them; who died forgotten in  
10 an hospital; and whose latter years were spent in contriving shows for fairs, and carrying an elegy or epithalamium, of which the beginning and end were occasionally varied, but the intermediate parts were always the same, to every house where there was a funeral or a wedding; might, with truth, have had inscribed upon his stone,

"Here lies the Rival and Antagonist of Dryden."

Settle was, for this rebellion, severely chastised by Dryden under the name of *Doeg*, in the second part of "Absalom and Achitophel," and was perhaps for his factious audacity  
20 made the city poet, whose annual office was to describe the glories of the Mayor's day. Of these bards he was the last, and seems not much to have deserved even this degree of regard, if it was paid to his political opinions; for he afterwards wrote a panegyrick on the virtues of judge Jefferies, and what more could have been done by the meanest zealot for prerogative?

Of translated fragments, or occasional poems, to enumerate the titles, or settle the dates would be tedious, with little use. It may be observed, that as Dryden's genius  
30 was commonly excited by some personal regard, he rarely writes upon a general topick.

Soon after the accession of king James, when the design of reconciling the nation to the church of Rome became apparent, and the religion of the court gave the only

efficacious title to its favours, Dryden declared himself a convert to popery. This at any other time might have passed with little censure. Sir *Kenelm Digby* embraced popery; the two *Rainolds* reciprocally converted one another; and *Chillingworth* himself was a while so entangled in the wilds of controversy, as to retire for quiet to an infallible church. If men of argument and study can find such difficulties, or such motives, as may either unite them to the church of Rome, or detain them in uncertainty, there can be no wonder that a man, who perhaps 10 never enquired why he was a protestant, should by an artful and experienced disputant be made a papist, overborn by the sudden violence of new and unexpected arguments, or deceived by a representation which shews only the doubts on one part, and only the evidence on the other.

That conversion will always be suspected that apparently concurs with interest. He that never finds his error till it hinders his progress towards wealth or honour, will not be thought to love Truth only for herself. Yet it may easily happen that information may come at a commodious time; 20 and as truth and interest are not by any fatal necessity at variance, that one may by accident introduce the other. When opinions are struggling into popularity, the arguments by which they are opposed or defended become more known; and he that changes his profession would perhaps have changed it before, with the like opportunities of instruction. This was then the state of popery; every artifice was used to shew it in its fairest form; and it must be owned to be a religion of external appearance sufficiently attractive.

30

It is natural to hope that a comprehensive is likewise an elevated soul, and that whoever is wise is also honest. I am willing to believe that Dryden, having employed his mind, active as it was, upon different studies, and filled it, capacious as it was, with other materials, came unprovided

to the controversy, and wanted rather skill to discover the right than virtue to maintain it. But enquiries into the heart are not for man ; we must now leave him to his Judge.

The priests, having strengthened their cause by so powerful an adherent, were not long before they brought him into action. They engaged him to defend the controversial papers found in the strong-box of Charles the Second, and, what yet was harder, to defend them against  
10 Stillingfleet.

With hopes of promoting popery, he was employed to translate Maimbourg's "History of the League ;" which he published with a large introduction. His name is likewise prefixed to the English "Life of Francis Xavier ;" but I know not that he ever owned himself the translator. Perhaps the use of his name was a pious fraud, which however seems not to have had much effect ; for neither of the books, I believe, was ever popular.

The version of Xavier's Life is commended by Brown,  
20 in a pamphlet not written to flatter ; and the occasion of it is said to have been, that the Queen, when she solicited a son, made vows to him as her tutelary saint.

He was supposed to have undertaken to translate Varillas's "History of Heresies ;" and when *Burnet* published Remarks upon it, to have written an *Answer* ; upon which Burnet makes the following observation :

"I have been informed from England, that a gentleman, who is famous both for poetry and several other things, had spent three months in translating M. Varillas's History ;  
30 but that, as soon as my Reflections appeared, he discontinued his labour, finding the credit of his author was gone. Now, if he thinks it is recovered by his Answer, he will perhaps go on with his translation ; and this may be, for aught I know, as good an entertainment for him as the conversation that he had set on between the Hinds and

Panthers, and all the rest of animals, for whom M. Varillas may serve well enough as an author : and this history and that poem are such extraordinary things of their kind, that it will be but suitable to see the author of the worst poem become likewise the translator of the worst history that the age has produced. If his grace and his wit improve both proportionably, he will hardly find that he has gained much by the change he has made, from having no religion to chuse one of the worst. It is true, he had somewhat to sink from in matter of wit ; but as for his morals, it is 10 scarce possible for him to grow a worse man than he was. He has lately wreaked his malice on me for spoiling his three months labour ; but in it he has done me all the honour that any man can receive from him, which is to be railed at by him. If I had ill-nature enough to prompt me to wish a very bad wish for him, it should be, that he would go on and finish his translation. By that it will appear, whether the English nation, which is the most competent judge in this matter, has, upon the seeing our debate, pronounced in M. Varillas's favour, or in mine. It 20 is true, Mr. D. will suffer a little by it ; but at least it will serve to keep him in from other extravagancies ; and if he gains little honour by this work, yet he cannot lose so much by it as he has done by his last employment."

Having probably felt his own inferiority in theological controversy, he was desirous of trying whether, by bringing poetry to aid his arguments, he might become a more efficacious defender of his new profession. To reason in verse was, indeed, one of his powers ; but subtilty and harmony united are still feeble, when opposed to truth. 30

Actuated therefore by zeal for Rome, or hope of fame, he published the "Hind and Panther," a poem in which the church of Rome, figured by the *milk-white Hind*, defends her tenets against the church of England, represented by the *Panther*, a beast beautiful, but spotted.



A fable which exhibits two beasts talking Theology, appears at once full of absurdity ; and it was accordingly ridiculed in the "City Mouse and Country Mouse," a parody, written by Montague, afterwards earl of Halifax, and Prior, who then gave the first specimen of his abilities.

The conversion of such a man, at such a time, was not likely to pass uncensured. Three dialogues were published by the facetious *Thomas Brown*, of which the two first were  
 10 called "Reasons of Mr. Bayes's changing his religion:" and the third "The Reasons of Mr. Hains the player's conversion and re-conversion." The first was printed in 1688, the second not till 1690, the third in 1691. The clamour seems to have been long continued, and the subject to have strongly fixed the publick attention.

In the two first dialogues *Bayes* is brought into the company of *Crites* and *Eugenius*, with whom he had formerly debated on dramatick poetry. The two talkers in the third are Mr. *Bayes* and Mr. *Hains*.

20 *Brown* was a man not deficient in literature, nor destitute of fancy ; but he seems to have thought it the pinnacle of excellence to be a *merry fellow* ; and therefore laid out his powers upon small jests or gross buffoonery, so that his performances have little intrinsick value, and were read only while they were recommended by the novelty of the event that occasioned them.

These dialogues are like his other works : what sense or knowledge they contain, is disgraced by the garb in which it is exhibited. One great source of pleasure is to call  
 30 *Dryden little Bayes*. *Ajax*, who happens to be mentioned, is *he that wore as many cowhides upon his shield as would have furnished half the king's army with shoe-leather*.

Being asked whether he has seen the "Hind and Panther," *Crites* answers : *Seen it ! Mr. Bayes, why I can stir no where but it pursues me ; it haunts me worse than a pewter-*

*buttoned serjeant does a decayed cit. Sometimes I meet it in a band-box, when my laundress brings home my linen ; sometimes, whether I will or no, it lights my pipe at a coffee-house ; sometimes it surprises me in a trunkmaker's shop ; and sometimes it refreshes my memory for me on the backside of a Chancery-lane parcel. For your comfort too, Mr. Bayes, I have not only seen it, as you may perceive, but have read it too, and can quote it as freely upon occasion as a frugal tradesman can quote that noble treatise the "Worth of a Penny" to his extravagant 'prentice, that revels in stewed 10 apples, and penny custards.*

The whole animation of these compositions arises from a profusion of ludicrous and affected comparisons. *To secure one's chastity, says Bayes, little more is necessary than to leave off a correspondence with the other sex, which, to a wise man, is no greater a punishment than it would be to a fanatic parson to be forbid seeing the "Cheats" and the "Committee" ; or for my Lord Mayor and Aldermen to be interdicted the sight of the "London Cuckold."*—This is the general strain, and therefore I shall be easily excused the 20 labour of more transcription.

Brown does not wholly forget past transactions : *You began, says Crites to Bayes, with a very indifferent religion, and have not mended the matter in your last choice. It was but reason that your Muse, which appeared first in a Tyrant's quarrel, should employ her last efforts to justify the usurpations of the Hind.*

Next year the nation was summoned to celebrate the birth of the Prince. Now was the time for Dryden to rouse his imagination, and strain his voice. Happy days 30 were at hand, and he was willing to enjoy and diffuse the anticipated blessings. He published a poem, filled with predictions of greatness and prosperity ; predictions of which it is not necessary to tell how they have been verified.

A few months passed after these joyful notes, and every blossom of popish hope was blasted for ever by the Revolution. A papist now could be no longer Laureat. The revenue, which he had enjoyed with so much pride and praise, was transferred to Shadwell, an old enemy, whom he had formerly stigmatised by the name of *Og*. Dryden could not decently complain that he was deposed; but seemed very angry that Shadwell succeeded him, and has therefore celebrated the intruder's inauguration in a poem  
10 exquisitely satirical, called "*Mac Flecknoe*;" of which the "*Dunciad*," as Pope himself declares, is an imitation, though more extended in its plan, and more diversified in its incidents.

It is related by Prior, that Lord Dorset, when, as chamberlain, he was constrained to eject Dryden from his office, gave him from his own purse an allowance equal to the salary. This is no romantick or incredible act of generosity; an hundred a year is often enough given to claims less cogent, by men less famed for liberality. Yet  
20 Dryden always represented himself as suffering under a public infliction; and once particularly demands respect for the patience with which he endured the loss of his little fortune. His patron might, indeed, enjoin him to suppress his bounty; but if he suffered nothing, he should not have complained.

During the short reign of king James he had written nothing for the stage, being, in his opinion, more profitably employed in controversy and flattery. Of praise he might perhaps have been less lavish without inconvenience, for  
30 James was never said to have much regard for poetry: he was to be flattered only by adopting his religion.

Times were now changed: Dryden was no longer the court-poet, and was to look back for support to his former trade; and having waited about two years, either considering himself as discountenanced by the publick, or

perhaps expecting a second revolution, he produced "Don Sebastian" in 1690; and in the next four years four dramas more.

In 1693 appeared a new version of Juvenal and Persius. Of Juvenal he translated the first, third, sixth, tenth, and sixteenth satires; and of Persius the whole work. On this occasion he introduced his two sons to the publick, as nurselings of the Muses. The fourteenth of Juvenal was the work of John, and the seventh of Charles Dryden. He prefixed a very ample preface in the form of a dedication <sup>10</sup> to lord Dorset; and there gives an account of the design which he had once formed to write an epic poem on the actions either of Arthur or the Black Prince. He considered the epick as necessarily including some kind of supernatural agency, and had imagined a new kind of contest between the guardian angels of kingdoms, of whom he conceived that each might be represented zealous for his charge, without any intended opposition to the purposes of the Supreme Being, of which all created minds must in part be ignorant. 20

This is the most reasonable scheme of celestial interposition that ever was formed. The surprizes and terrors of enchantments, which have succeeded to the intrigues and oppositions of pagan deities, afford very striking scenes, and open a vast extent to the imagination; but, as Boileau observes, and Boileau will be seldom found mistaken, with this incurable defect, that in a contest between heaven and hell we know at the beginning which is to prevail; for this reason we follow Rinaldo to the enchanted wood with more curiosity than terror. 30

In the scheme of Dryden there is one great difficulty, which yet he would perhaps have had address enough to surmount. In a war justice can be but on one side; and to entitle the hero to the protection of angels, he must fight in the defence of indubitable right. Yet some of the

celestial beings, thus opposed to each other, must have been represented as defending guilt.

That this poem was never written, is reasonably to be lamented. It would doubtless have improved our numbers, and enlarged our language, and might perhaps have contributed by pleasing instruction to rectify our opinions, and purify our manners.

What he required as the indispensable condition of such an undertaking, a publick stipend, was not likely in those  
10 times to be obtained. Riches were not become familiar to us, nor had the nation yet learned to be liberal.

This plan he charged Blackmore with stealing; only, says he, *the guardian angels of kingdoms were machines too ponderous for him to manage.*

In 1694, he began the most laborious and difficult of all his works, the translation of Virgil; from which he borrowed two months, that he might turn Fresnoy's "Art of Painting" into English prose. The preface, which he  
20 boasts to have written in twelve mornings, exhibits a parallel of poetry and painting, with a miscellaneous collection of critical remarks, such as cost a mind stored like his no labour to produce them.

In 1697, he published his version of the works of Virgil; and that no opportunity of profit might be lost, dedicated the Pastorals to the lord Clifford, the Georgics to the earl of Chesterfield, and the Eneid to the earl of Mulgrave. This œconomy of flattery, at once lavish and discreet, did not pass without observation.

This translation was censured by Milbourn, a clergy-  
30 man, styled by Pope *the fairest of criticks*, because he exhibited his own version to be compared with that which he condemned.

His last work was his "Fables," published in 1699, in consequence, as is supposed, of a contract now in the hands of Mr. Tonson; by which he obliged himself, in considera-

tion of three hundred pounds, to finish for the press ten thousand verses.

In this volume is comprised the well-known ode on St. Cecilia's day, which, as appeared by a letter communicated to Dr. Birch, he spent a fortnight in composing and correcting. But what is this to the patience and diligence of Boileau, whose "Equivoque," a poem of only three hundred and forty-six lines, took from his life eleven months to write it, and three years to revise it!

Part of this book of Fables is the first Iliad in English, 10 intended as a specimen of a version of the whole. Considering into what hands Homer was to fall, the reader cannot but rejoice that this project went no further.

The time was now at hand which was to put an end to all his schemes and labours. On the first of May 1701, having been some time, as he tells us, a cripple in his limbs, he died in Gerard-street of a mortification in his leg.

There is extant a wild story relating to some vexatious events that happened at his funeral, which, at the end of 20 Congreve's Life, by a writer of I know not what credit, are thus related, as I find the account transferred to a biographical dictionary:

"Mr. Dryden dying on the Wednesday morning, Dr. Thomas Sprat, then bishop of Rochester and dean of Westminster, sent the next day to the lady Elizabeth Howard, Mr. Dryden's widow, that he would make a present of the ground, which was forty pounds, with all the other Abbey-fees. The lord Halifax likewise sent to the lady Elizabeth, and Mr. Charles Dryden her son, that, if they would give 30 him leave to bury Mr. Dryden, he would inter him with a gentleman's private funeral, and afterwards bestow five hundred pounds on a monument in the Abbey; which, as they had no reason to refuse, they accepted. On the Saturday following the company came: the corpse was put

into a velvet hearse, and eighteen mourning coaches, filled with company, attended. When they were just ready to move, the lord Jefferies, son of the lord chancellor Jefferies, with some of his rakish companions coming by, asked whose funeral it was: and being told Mr. Dryden's, he said, 'What, shall Dryden, the greatest honour and ornament of the nation, be buried after this private manner! No, gentlemen, let all that loved Mr. Dryden, and honour his memory, alight and join with me in gaining my lady's consent to let me have the honour of his interment, which shall be after another manner than this; and I will bestow a thousand pounds on a monument in the Abbey for him.' The gentlemen in the coaches, not knowing of the bishop of Rochester's favour, nor of the lord Halifax's generous design (they both having, out of respect to the family, enjoined the lady Elizabeth and her son to keep their favour concealed to the world, and let it pass for their own expence) readily came out of the coaches, and attended lord Jefferies up to the lady's bedside, who was then sick; he repeated the purport of what he had before said; but she absolutely refusing, he fell on his knees, vowing never to rise till his request was granted. The rest of the company by his desire kneeled also; and the lady, being under a sudden surprise, fainted away. As soon as she recovered her speech, she cried, *No, no*. Enough, gentlemen, replied he; my lady is very good, she says, *Go, go*. She repeated her former words with all her strength, but in vain; for her feeble voice was lost in their acclamations of joy; and the lord Jefferies ordered the hearseman to carry the corpse to Mr. Russel's, an undertaker's in Cheapside, and leave it there till he should send orders for the embalment, which, he added, should be after the royal manner. His directions were obeyed, the company dispersed, and lady Elizabeth and her son remained inconsolable. The next day Mr. Charles Dryden waited on the lord Halifax and the

bishop, to excuse his mother and himself, by relating the real truth. But neither his lordship nor the bishop would admit of any plea ; especially the latter, who had the Abbey lighted, the ground opened, the choir attending, an anthem ready set, and himself waiting for some time without any corpse to bury. The undertaker, after three days expectance of orders for embalment without receiving any, waited on the lord Jefferies ; who pretending ignorance of the matter, turned it off with an ill-natured jest, saying, That those who observed the orders of a drunken frolick deserved 10 no better ; that he remembered nothing at all of it ; and that he might do what he pleased with the corpse. Upon this, the undertaker waited upon the lady Elizabeth and her son, and threatened to bring the corpse home, and set it before the door. They desired a day's respite, which was granted. Mr. Charles Dryden wrote a handsome letter to the lord Jefferies, who returned it with this cool answer, 'That he knew nothing of the matter, and would be troubled no more about it.' He then addressed the lord 20 Halifax and the bishop of Rochester, who absolutely refused 20 to do any thing in it. In this distress Dr. Garth sent for the corpse to the College of Physicians, and proposed a funeral by subscription, to which himself set a most noble example. At last a day, about three weeks after Mr. Dryden's decease, was appointed for the interment : Dr. Garth pronounced a fine Latin oration, at the College, over the corpse ; which was attended to the Abbey by a numerous train of coaches. When the funeral was over, Mr. Charles Dryden sent a challenge to the lord Jefferies, who refusing to answering it, he sent several others, and went 30 often himself ; but could neither get a letter delivered, nor admittance to speak to him : which so incensed him, that he resolved, since his lordship refused to answer him like a gentleman, that he would watch an opportunity to meet, and fight off-hand, though with all the rules of honour ;



which his lordship hearing, left the town: and Mr. Charles Dryden could never have the satisfaction of meeting him, though he sought it till his death with the utmost application."

This story I once intended to omit, as it appears with no great evidence; nor have I met with any confirmation, but in a letter of Farquhar, and he only relates that the funeral of Dryden was tumultuary and confused.

Supposing the story true, we may remark that the gradual change of manners, though imperceptible in the process, appears great when different times, and those not very distant, are compared. If at this time a young drunken Lord should interrupt the pompous regularity of a magnificent funeral, what would be the event, but that he would be justled out of the way, and compelled to be quiet? If he should thrust himself into a house, he would be sent roughly away; and what is yet more to the honour of the present time, I believe, that those who had subscribed to the funeral of a man like Dryden, would not, for such an accident, have withdrawn their contributions.

He was buried among the poets in Westminster Abbey, where, though the duke of Newcastle had, in a general dedication prefixed by Congreve to his dramattick works, accepted thanks for his intention of erecting him a monument, he lay long without distinction, till the duke of Buckinghamshire gave him a tablet, inscribed only with the name of DRYDEN.

He married the lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of the earl of Berkshire, with circumstances, according to the satire imputed to lord Somers, not very honourable to either party: by her he had three sons, Charles, John, and Henry. Charles was usher of the palace to pope Clement the XIth, and visiting England in 1704, was drowned in an attempt to swim across the Thames at Windsor.

John was author of a comedy called "The Husband his own Cuckold." He is said to have died at Rome. Henry entered into some religious order. It is some proof of Dryden's sincerity in his second religion, that he taught it to his sons. A man conscious of hypocritical profession in himself, is not likely to convert others; and as his sons were qualified in 1693 to appear among the translators of Juvenal, they must have been taught some religion before their father's change.

Of the person of Dryden I know not any account; of 10 his mind, the portrait which has been left by Congreve, who knew him with great familiarity, is such as adds our love of his manners to our admiration of his genius. "He was," we are told, "of a nature exceedingly humane and compassionate, ready to forgive injuries, and capable of a sincere reconciliation with those that had offended him. His friendship, where he professed it, went beyond his professions. He was of a very easy, of very pleasing access; but somewhat slow, and, as it were, diffident in his advances to others: he had that in his nature which abhorred 20 intrusion into any society whatever. He was therefore less known, and consequently his character became more liable to misapprehensions and misrepresentations: he was very modest, and very easily to be discountenanced in his approaches to his equals or superiors. As his reading had been very extensive, so was he very happy in a memory tenacious of every thing that he had read. He was not more possessed of knowledge than he was communicative of it; but then his communication was by no means pedantick, or imposed upon the conversation, but just such, and 30 went so far as, by the natural turn of the conversation in which he was engaged, it was necessarily promoted or required. He was extreme ready, and gentle in his correction of the errors of any writer who thought fit to consult him, and full as ready and patient to admit of the repre-

hensions of others, in respect of his own oversights or mistakes."

To this account of Congreve nothing can be objected but the fondness of friendship; and to have excited that fondness in such a mind is no small degree of praise. The disposition of Dryden, however, is shewn in this character rather as it exhibited itself in cursory conversation, than as it operated on the more important parts of life. His placability and his friendship indeed were solid virtues; but  
 10 courtesy and good-humour are often found with little real worth. Since Congreve, who knew him well, has told us no more, the rest must be collected as it can from other testimonies, and particularly from those notices which Dryden has very liberally given us of himself.

The modesty which made him so slow to advance, and so easy to be repulsed, was certainly no suspicion of deficient merit, or unconsciousness of his own value: he appears to have known, in its whole extent, the dignity of his character, and to have set a very high value on his own  
 20 powers and performances. He probably did not offer his conversation, because he expected it to be solicited; and he retired from a cold reception, not submissive but indignant, with such reverence of his own greatness as made him unwilling to expose it to neglect or violation.

His modesty was by no means inconsistent with ostentatiousness: he is diligent enough to remind the world of his merit, and expresses with very little scruple his high opinion of his own powers; but his self-commendations are read without scorn or indignation; we allow his claims, and love  
 30 his frankness.

Tradition, however, has not allowed that his confidence in himself exempted him from jealousy of others. He is accused of envy and insidiousness; and is particularly charged with inciting Creech to translate Horace, that he might lose the reputation which Lucretius had given him.

Of this charge we immediately discover that it is merely conjectural; the purpose was such as no man would confess; and a crime that admits no proof, why should we believe?

He has been described as magisterially presiding over the younger writers, and assuming the distribution of poetical fame; but he who excels has a right to teach, and he whose judgement is incontestable may, without usurpation, examine and decide.

Congreve represents him as ready to advise and instruct; 10 but there is reason to believe that his communication was rather useful than entertaining. He declares of himself that he was saturnine, and not one of those whose spritely sayings diverted company; and one of his censors makes him say,

“Nor wine nor love could ever see me gay;  
To writing bred, I knew not what to say.”

There are men whose powers operate only at leisure and in retirement, and whose intellectual vigour deserts them in conversation; whom merriment confuses, and objection 20 disconcerts; whose bashfulness restrains their exertion, and suffers them not to speak till the time of speaking is past; or whose attention to their own character makes them unwilling to utter at hazard what has not been considered, and cannot be recalled.

Of Dryden's sluggishness in conversation it is vain to search or to guess the cause. He certainly wanted neither sentiments nor language; his intellectual treasures were great, though they were locked up from his own use. *His* 30 *thoughts when he wrote, flowed in upon him so fast, that his only care was which to chuse, and which to reject.* Such rapidity of composition naturally promises a flow of talk, yet we must be content to believe what an enemy says of him, when he likewise says it of himself. But whatever

was his character as a companion, it appears that he lived in familiarity with the highest persons of his time. It is related by Carte of the duke of Ormond, that he used often to pass a night with Dryden, and those with whom Dryden consorted : who they were, Carte has not told ; but certainly the convivial table at which Ormond sat was not surrounded with a plebeian society. He was indeed reproached with boasting of his familiarity with the great ; and Horace will support him in the opinion, that to please superiours is  
10 not the lowest kind of merit.

The merit of pleasing must, however, be estimated by the means. Favour is not always gained by good actions or laudable qualities. Caresses and preferments are often bestowed on the auxiliaries of vice, the procurers of pleasure, or the flatterers of vanity. Dryden has never been charged with any personal agency unworthy of a good character : he abetted vice and vanity only with his pen. One of his enemies has accused him of lewdness in his conversation ; but if accusation without proof be credited, who  
20 shall be innocent ?

His works afford too many examples of dissolute licentiousness, and abject adulation ; but they were probably, like his merriment, artificial and constrained ; the effects of study and meditation, and his trade rather than his pleasure.

Of the mind that can trade in corruption, and can deliberately pollute itself with ideal wickedness for the sake of spreading the contagion in society, I wish not to conceal or excuse the depravity.—Such degradation of the dignity  
30 of genius, such abuse of superlative abilities, cannot be contemplated but with grief and indignation. What consolation can be had, Dryden has afforded, by living to repent, and to testify his repentance.

Of dramatick immorality he did not want examples among his predecessors, or companions among his contem-

poraries ; but in the meanness and servility of hyperbolical adulation, I know not whether, since the days in which the Roman emperors were deified, he has been ever equalled, except by Afra Behn in an address to Eleanor Gwyn. When once he has undertaken the task of praise, he no longer retains shame in himself, nor supposes it in his patron. As many odoriferous bodies are observed to diffuse perfumes from year to year, without sensible diminution of bulk or weight, he appears never to have impoverished his mint of flattery by his expences, however lavish. He 10 had all the forms of excellence, intellectual and moral, combined in his mind, with endless variation ; and when he had scattered on the hero of the day the golden shower of wit and virtue, he had ready for him, whom he wished to court on the morrow, new wit and virtue with another stamp. Of this kind of meanness he never seems to decline the practice, or lament the necessity : he considers the great as entitled to encomiastick homage, and brings praise rather as a tribute than a gift, more delighted with the fertility of his invention than mortified by the prosti- 20 tution of his judgement. It is indeed not certain, that on these occasions his judgement much rebelled against his interest. There are minds which easily sink into submission, that look on grandeur with undistinguishing reverence, and discover no defect where there is elevation of rank and affluence of riches.

With his praises of others and of himself is always intermingled a strain of discontent and lamentation, a sullen growl of resentment, or a querulous murmur of distress. His works are under-valued, his merit is unre- 30 warded, and *he has few thanks to pay his stars that he was born among Englishmen.* To his criticks he is sometimes contemptuous, sometimes resentful, and sometimes submissive. The writer who thinks his works formed for duration, mistakes his interest when he mentions his enemies. He

degrades his own dignity by shewing that he was affected by their censures, and gives lasting importance to names, which, left to themselves, would vanish from remembrance. From this principle Dryden did not oft depart; his complaints are for the greater part general; he seldom pollutes his page with an adverse name. He condescended indeed to a controversy with Settle, in which he perhaps may be considered rather as assaulting than repelling; and since Settle is sunk into oblivion, his libel remains injurious only  
10 to himself.

Among answers to criticks, no poetical attacks, or altercations, are to be included; they are, like other poems, effusions of genius, produced as much to obtain praise as to obviate censure. These Dryden practised, and in these he excelled.

Of Collier, Blackmore, and Milbourne, he has made mention in the preface to his Fables. To the censure of Collier, whose remarks may be rather termed admonitions than criticisms, he makes little reply; being, at the age of  
20 sixty-eight, attentive to better things than the claps of a playhouse. He complains of Collier's rudeness, and the *horse-play of his raillery*; and asserts that *in many places he has perverted by his glosses the meaning of what he censures*; but in other things he confesses that he is justly taxed; and says, with great calmness and candour, *I have pleaded guilty to all thoughts or expressions of mine that can be truly accused of obscenity, immorality, or profaneness, and retract them. If he be my enemy, let him triumph; if he be my friend, he will be glad of my repentance.* Yet, as our  
30 best dispositions are imperfect, he left standing in the same book a reflection on Collier of great asperity, and indeed of more asperity than wit.

Blackmore he represents as made his enemy by the poem of "Absalom and Achitophel," which *he thinks a little hard upon his fanatick patrons*; and charges him with

borrowing the plan of his "Arthur" from the preface to Juvenal, *though he had*, says he, *the baseness not to acknowledge his benefactor, but instead of it to traduce me in a libel.*

The libel in which Blackmore traduced him was a "Satire upon Wit;" in which, having lamented the exuberance of false wit and the deficiency of true, he proposes that all wit should be re-coined before it is current, and appoints masters of assay who shall reject all that is light or debased.

10

" 'Tis true, that when the coarse and worthless dross  
Is purg'd away, there will be mighty loss ;  
Ev'n Congreve, Southern, manly Wycherley,  
When thus refin'd, will grievous sufferers be ;  
Into the melting-pot when Dryden comes,  
What horrid stench will rise, what noisome fumes !  
How will he shrink, when all his lewd allay,  
And wicked mixture, shall be purg'd away ! "

Thus stands the passage in the last edition; but in the original there was an abatement of the censure, beginning thus :

" But what remains will be so pure, 'twill bear  
Th' examination of the most severe."

Blackmore, finding the censure resented, and the civility disregarded, ungenerously omitted the softer part. Such variations discover a writer who consults his passions more than his virtue; and it may be reasonably supposed that Dryden imputes his enmity to its true cause.

Of Milbourne he wrote only in general terms, such as are always ready at the call of anger, whether just or not: 30  
a short extract will be sufficient. *He pretends a quarrel to me, that I have fallen foul upon priesthood; if I have, I am only to ask pardon of good priests, and am afraid his share of the reparation will come to little. Let him be satisfied that he shall never be able to force himself upon me for an*



*adversary ; I condemn him too much to enter into competition with him.*

*As for the rest of those who have written against me, they are such scoundrels that they deserve not the least notice to be taken of them. Blackmore and Milbourne are only distinguished from the crowd by being remembered to their infamy.*

Dryden indeed discovered, in many of his writings, an affected and absurd malignity to priests and priesthood, 10 which naturally raised him many enemies, and which was sometimes as unseasonably resented as it was exerted. Trapp is angry that he calls the sacrificer in the "Georgicks" the *holy butcher*: the translation is indeed ridiculous ; but Trapp's anger arises from his zeal, not for the author, but the priest ; as if any reproach of the follies of paganism could be extended to the preachers of truth.

Dryden's dislike of the priesthood is imputed by Langbaine, and I think by Brown, to a repulse which he suffered 20 when he solicited ordination ; but he denies, in the preface to his "Fables," that he ever designed to enter into the church ; and such a denial he would not have hazarded, if he could have been convicted of falsehood.

Malevolence to the clergy is seldom at a great distance from irreverence of religion, and Dryden affords no exception to this observation. His writings exhibit many passages, which, with all the allowance that can be made for characters and occasions, are such as piety would not have admitted, and such as may vitiate light and unprincipled minds. 30 But there is no reason for supposing that he disbelieved the religion which he disobeyed. He forgot his duty rather than disowned it. His tendency to profaneness is the effect of levity, negligence, and loose conversation, with a desire of accommodating himself to the corruption of the times, by venturing to be wicked as far as he durst. When he

professed himself a convert to Popery, he did not pretend to have received any new conviction of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity.

The persecution of criticks was not the worst of his vexations; he was much more disturbed by the importunities of want. His complaints of poverty are so frequently repeated, either with the dejection of weakness sinking in helpless misery, or the indignation of merit claiming its tribute from mankind, that it is impossible not to detest the age which could impose on such a man <sup>10</sup> the necessity of such solicitations, or not to despise the man who could submit to such solicitations without necessity.

Whether by the world's neglect, or his own imprudence, I am afraid that the greatest part of his life was passed in exigencies. Such outcries were surely never uttered but in severe pain. Of his supplies or his expences no probable estimate can now be made. Except the salary of the Laureate, to which king James added the office of Historiographer, perhaps with some additional emoluments, his <sup>20</sup> whole revenue seems to have been casual; and it is well known that he seldom lives frugally who lives by chance. Hope is always liberal, and they that trust her promises make little scruple of revelling to-day on the profits of the morrow.

Of his plays the profit was not great, and of the produce of his other works very little intelligence can be had. By discoursing with the late amiable Mr. Tonson, I could not find that any memorials of the transactions between his predecessor and Dryden had been preserved, except the <sup>30</sup> following papers:

“ I do hereby promise to pay John Dryden, Esq; or order, on the 25th of March, 1699, the sum of two hundred and fifty guineas, in consideration of ten thousand verses, which the said John Dryden, Esq; is to deliver to me

"Jacob Tonson, when finished, whereof seven thousand five hundred verses, more or less, are already in the said Jacob Tonson's possession. And I do hereby farther promise, and engage myself, to make up the said sum of two hundred and fifty guineas three hundred pounds sterling to the said John Dryden, Esq; his executors, administrators, or assigns, at the beginning of the second impression of the said ten thousand verses.

"In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and  
 10 seal, this 20th day of March, 169 $\frac{8}{9}$ .

"Jacob Tonson.

"Sealed and delivered, being first  
 duly stamp'd, pursuant to the acts  
 of parliament for that purpose, in  
 the presence of

"Ben. Portlock.

"Will. Congreve."

"March 24th, 1698.

"Received then of Mr. Jacob Tonson the sum of two  
 20 hundred sixty-eight pounds fifteen shillings, in pursuance  
 of an agreement for ten thousand verses, to be delivered by  
 me to the said Jacob Tonson, whereof I have already de-  
 livered to him about seven thousand five hundred, more or  
 less; he the said Jacob Tonson being obliged to make up  
 the foresaid sum of two hundred sixty-eight pounds fifteen  
 shillings three hundred pounds, at the beginning of the  
 second impression of the foresaid ten thousand verses;

"I say, received by me

"John Dryden.

30 "Witness Charles Dryden."

Two hundred and fifty guineas, at £1 1s. 6d. is £268 15s.  
 It is manifest from the dates of this contract, that it re-

lates to the volume of "Fables," which contains about twelve thousand verses, and for which therefore the payment must have been afterwards enlarged.

I have been told of another letter yet remaining, in which he desires Tonson to bring him money, to pay for a watch which he had ordered for his son, and which the maker would not leave without the price.

The inevitable consequence of poverty is dependence. Dryden had probably no recourse in his exigencies but to his bookseller. The particular character of Tonson I do not know; but the general conduct of traders was much less liberal in those times than in our own; their views were narrower, and their manners grosser. To the mercantile ruggedness of that race, the delicacy of the poet was sometimes exposed. Lord Bolingbroke, who in his youth had cultivated poetry, related to Dr. King, of Oxford, that one day, when he visited Dryden, they heard, as they were conversing, another person entering the house. "This," said Dryden, "is Tonson. You will take care not to depart before he goes away; for I have not completed the sheet which I promised him; and if you leave me unprotected, I must suffer all the rudeness to which his resentment can prompt his tongue."

What rewards he obtained for his poems, besides the payment of the bookseller, cannot be known: Mr. Derrick, who consulted some of his relations, was informed that his "Fables" obtained five hundred pounds from the dutchess of Ormond; a present not unsuitable to the magnificence of that splendid family; and he quotes Moyle, as relating that forty pounds were paid by a musical society for the use of "Alexander's Feast."

In those days the œconomy of government was yet unsettled, and the payments of the Exchequer were dilatory and uncertain: of this disorder there is reason to believe that the Laureat sometimes felt the effects; for in one of

his prefaces he complains of those, who, being intrusted with the distribution of the Prince's bounty, suffer those that depend upon it to languish in penury.

Of his petty habits or slight amusements, tradition has retained little. Of the only two men whom I have found to whom he was personally known, one told me that at the house which he frequented, called Will's Coffee-house, the appeal upon any literary dispute was made to him; and the other related, that his armed chair, which in the winter  
10 had a settled and prescriptive place by the fire, was in the summer placed in the balcony, and that he called the two places his winter and his summer seat. This is all the intelligence which his two survivors afforded me.

One of his opinions will do him no honour in the present age, though in his own time, at least in the beginning of it, he was far from having it confined to himself. He put great confidence in the prognostications of judicial astrology. In the Appendix to the "Life of Congreve" is a narrative of some of his predictions wonderfully fulfilled;  
20 but I know not the writer's means of information, or character of veracity. That he had the configurations of the horoscope in his mind, and considered them as influencing the affairs of men, he does not forbear to hint.

" The utmost malice of the stars is past.—  
Now frequent *trines* the happier lights among,  
And *high-rais'd Jove*, from his dark prison freed,  
Those weights took off that on his planet hung,  
Will gloriously the new-laid works succeed."

He has elsewhere shewn his attention to the planetary  
30 powers; and in the preface to his "Fables" has endeavoured obliquely to justify his superstition, by attributing the same to some of the Ancients. The latter, added to this narrative, leaves no doubt of his notions or practice.

So slight and so scanty is the knowledge which I have been able to collect concerning the private life and domes-

tick manners of a man, whom every English generation must mention with reverence as a critick and a poet.

Dryden may be properly considered as the father of English criticism, as the writer who first taught us to determine upon principles the merit of composition. Of our former poets, the greatest dramatist wrote without rules, conducted through life and nature by a genius that rarely misled, and rarely deserted him. Of the rest, those who knew the laws of propriety had neglected to teach them.

10

Two "Arts of English Poetry" were written in the days of Elizabeth by Webb and Puttenham, from which something might be learned, and a few hints had been given by Jonson and Cowley; but Dryden's "Essay on Dramatick Poetry" was the first regular and valuable treatise on the art of writing.

He who, having formed his opinions in the present age of English literature, turns back to peruse this dialogue, will not perhaps find much increase of knowledge, or much novelty of instruction; but he is to remember that critical 20 principles were then in the hands of a few, who had gathered them partly from the Ancients, and partly from the Italians and French. The structure of dramatick poems was not then generally understood. Audiences applauded by instinct, and poets perhaps often pleased by chance.

A writer who obtains his full purpose loses himself in his own lustre. Of an opinion which is no longer doubted, the evidence ceases to be examined. Of an art universally practised, the first teacher is forgotten. Learning once 30 made popular is no longer learning; it has the appearance of something which we have bestowed upon ourselves, as the dew appears to rise from the field which it refreshes.

To judge rightly of an author, we must transport our-

selves to his time, and examine what were the wants of his contemporaries, and what were his means of supplying them. That which is easy at one time was difficult at another. Dryden at least imported his science, and gave his country what it wanted before ; or rather, he imported only the materials, and manufactured them by his own skill.

The dialogue on the Drama was one of his first essays of criticism, written when he was yet a timorous candidate  
10 for reputation, and therefore laboured with that diligence which he might allow himself somewhat to remit, when his name gave sanction to his positions, and his awe of the public was abated, partly by custom, and partly by success. It will not be easy to find, in all the opulence of our language, a treatise so artfully variegated with successive representations of opposite probabilities, so enlivened with imagery, so brightened with illustrations. His portraits of the English dramatists are wrought with great spirit and diligence. The account of Shakspeare may stand as a  
20 perpetual model of encomiastick criticism ; exact without minuteness, and lofty without exaggeration. The praise lavished by Longinus, on the attestation of the heroes of Marathon, by Demosthenes, fades away before it. In a few lines is exhibited a character, so extensive in its comprehension, and so curious in its limitations, that nothing can be added, diminished, or reformed ; nor can the editors and admirers of Shakspeare, in all their emulation of reverence, boast of much more than of having diffused and paraphrased this epitome of excellence, of having changed  
30 Dryden's gold for baser metal, of lower value though of greater bulk.

In this, and in all his other essays on the same subject, the criticism of Dryden is the criticism of a poet ; not a dull collection of theorems, not a rude detection of faults, which perhaps the censor was not able to have committed ;

but a gay and vigorous dissertation, where delight is mingled with instruction, and where the author proves his right of judgement, by his power of performance.

The different manner and effect with which critical knowledge may be conveyed, was perhaps never more clearly exemplified than in the performances of Rymer and Dryden. It was said of a dispute between two mathematicians, "*malim cum Scaligero errare, quam cum Clavio recte sapere*;" that *it was more eligible to go wrong with one than right with the other*. A tendency of the same kind 10 every mind must feel at the perusal of Dryden's prefaces and Rymer's discourses. With Dryden we are wandering in quest of Truth; whom we find, if we find her at all, drest in the graces of elegance; and if we miss her, the labour of the pursuit rewards itself; we are led only through fragrance and flowers: Rymer, without taking a nearer, takes a rougher way; every step is to be made through thorns and brambles; and Truth, if we meet her, appears repulsive by her mien, and ungraceful by her habit. Dryden's criticism has the majesty of a queen; 20 Rymer's has the ferocity of a tyrant.

As he had studied with great diligence the art of poetry, and enlarged or rectified his notions, by experience perpetually increasing, he had his mind stored with principles and observations; he poured out his knowledge with little labour; for of labour, notwithstanding the multiplicity of his productions, there is sufficient reason to suspect that he was not a lover. To write *con amore*, with fondness for the employment, with perpetual touches and retouches, with unwillingness to take leave of his own idea, and an un- 30 wearied pursuit of unattainable perfection, was, I think, no part of his character.

His Criticism may be considered as general or occasional. In his general precepts, which depend upon the nature of things, and the structure of the human mind, he may



doubtless be safely recommended to the confidence of the reader ; but his occasional and particular positions were sometimes interested, sometimes negligent, and sometimes capricious. It is not without reason that Trapp, speaking of the praises which he bestows on Palamon and Arcite, says, “*Novimus judicium Drydeni de poemate quodam Chauceri, pulchro sane illo, et admodum laudando, nimirum quod non modo vere epicum sit, sed Iliada etiam atque Æneada æquet, imo superet. Sed novimus eodem tempore*  
 10 *viri illius maximi non semper accuratissimas esse censuras, nec ad severissimam critices normam exactas : illo judice id plerumque optimum est, quod nunc præ manibus habet, & in quo nunc occupatur.*”

He is therefore by no means constant to himself. His defence and desertion of dramattick rhyme is generally known. *Spence*, in his remarks on Pope's “*Odyssey*,” produces what he thinks an unconquerable quotation from Dryden's preface to the “*Eneid*,” in favour of translating an epic poem into blank verse ; but he forgets that when  
 20 his author attempted the “*Iliad*,” some years afterwards, he departed from his own decision, and translated into rhyme.

When he has any objection to obviate, or any license to defend, he is not very scrupulous about what he asserts, nor very cautious, if the present purpose be served, not to entangle himself in his own sophistries. But when all arts are exhausted, like other hunted animals, he sometimes stands at bay ; when he cannot disown the grossness of one of his plays, he declares that he knows not any law that  
 30 prescribes morality to a comick poet.

His remarks on ancient or modern writers are not always to be trusted. His parallel of the versification of Ovid with that of Claudian has been very justly censured by *Sewel*. His comparison of the first line of Virgil with the first of Statius is not happier. Virgil, he says, is soft and

gentle, and would have thought Statius mad if he had heard him thundering out

“Quæ superimposito moles geminata colosso.”

Statius perhaps heats himself, as he proceeds, to exaggerations somewhat hyperbolic; but undoubtedly Virgil would have been too hasty, if he had condemned him to straw for one sounding line. Dryden wanted an instance, and the first that occurred was impest into the service.

What he wishes to say, he says at hazard; he cited “Gorboduc,” which he had never seen; gives a false ac- 10  
count of *Chapman’s* versification; and discovers, in the preface to his “Fables,” that he translated the first book of the “Iliad,” without knowing what was in the second.

It will be difficult to prove that Dryden ever made any great advances in literature. As having distinguished himself at Westminster under the tuition of Busby, who advanced his scholars to a height of knowledge very rarely attained in grammar-schools, he resided afterwards at Cambridge, it is not to be supposed, that his skill in the ancient languages was deficient, compared with that of 20  
common students; but his scholastick acquisitions seem not proportionate to his opportunities and abilities. He could not, like Milton or Cowley, have made his name illustrious merely by his learning. He mentions but few books, and those such as lie in the beaten track of regular study; from which if ever he departs, he is in danger of losing himself in unknown regions.

In his Dialogue on the Drama, he pronounces with great confidence that the Latin tragedy of “Medea” is not Ovid’s, because it is not sufficiently interesting and 30  
pathetick. He might have determined the question upon surer evidence; for it is quoted by Quintilian as the work of Seneca; and the only line which remains of Ovid’s play, for one line is left us, is not there to be found. There was

therefore no need of the gravity of conjecture, or the discussion of plot or sentiment, to find what was already known upon higher authority than such discussions can ever reach.

His literature, though not always free from ostentation, will be commonly found either obvious, and made his own by the art of dressing it ; or superficial, which, by what he gives, shews what he wanted ; or erroneous, hastily collected, and negligently scattered.

10 Yet it cannot be said that his genius is ever unprovided of matter, or that his fancy languishes in penury of ideas. His works abound with knowledge, and sparkle with illustrations. There is scarcely any science or faculty that does not supply him with occasional images and lucky similitudes ; every page discovers a mind very widely acquainted both with art and nature, and in full possession of great stores of intellectual wealth. Of him that knows much, it is natural to suppose that he has read with diligence ; yet I rather believe that the knowledge of Dryden was  
20 gleaned from accidental intelligence and various conversation, by a quick apprehension, a judicious selection, and a happy memory, a keen appetite of knowledge, and a powerful digestion ; by vigilance that permitted nothing to pass without notice, and a habit of reflection that suffered nothing useful to be lost. A mind like Dryden's, always curious, always active, to which every understanding was proud to be associated, and of which every one solicited the regard, by an ambitious display of himself, had a more pleasant, perhaps a nearer way, to knowledge than by the  
30 silent progress of solitary reading. I do not suppose that he despised books, or intentionally neglected them ; but that he was carried out, by the impetuosity of his genius, to more vivid and speedy instructors ; and that his studies were rather desultory and fortuitous than constant and systematical.

It must be confessed that he scarcely ever appears to want book-learning but when he mentions books ; and to him may be transferred the praise which he gives his master Charles.

“ His conversation, wit, and part,  
 His knowledge in the noblest useful arts,  
 Were such, dead authors could not give,  
 But habitudes of those that live ;  
 Who, lighting him, did greater lights receive :  
 He drain'd from all, and all they knew, 10  
 His apprehension quick, his judgement true :  
 That the most learn'd with shame confess  
 His knowledge more, his reading only less.”

Of all this, however, if the proof be demanded, I will not undertake to give it ; the atoms of probability, of which my opinion has been formed, lie scattered over all his works ; and by him who thinks the question worth his notice, his works must be perused with very close attention.

Criticism, either didaectick or defensive, occupies almost 20 all his prose, except those pages which he has devoted to his patrons ; but none of his prefaces were ever thought tedious. They have not the formality of a settled style, in which the first half of the sentence betrays the other. The clauses are never balanced, nor the periods modelled ; every word seems to drop by chance, though it falls into its proper place. Nothing is cold or languid ; the whole is airy, animated, and vigorous ; what is little, is gay ; what is great, is splendid. He may be thought to mention himself too frequently ; but while he forces himself upon 30 our esteem, we cannot refuse him to stand high in his own. Every thing is excused by the play of images and the spriteliness of expression. Though all is easy, nothing is feeble ; though all seem careless, there is nothing harsh ; and though, since his earlier works, more

than a century has passed, they have nothing yet uncouth or obsolete.

He who writes much, will not easily escape a manner, such a recurrence of particular modes as may be easily noted. Dryden is always *another and the same*, he does not exhibit a second time the same elegancies in the same form, nor appears to have any art other than that of expressing with clearness what he thinks with vigour. His style could not easily be imitated, either seriously or  
10 ludicrously ; for, being always equable and always varied, it has no prominent or discriminative characters. The beauty who is totally free from disproportion of parts and features, cannot be ridiculed by an overcharged resemblance.

From his prose, however, Dryden derives only his accidental and secondary praise ; the veneration with which his name is pronounced by every cultivator of English literature, is paid to him as he refined the language, improved the sentiments, and tuned the numbers of English  
20 poetry

After about half a century of forced thoughts, and rugged metre, some advances towards nature and harmony had been already made by Waller and Denham ; they had shewn that long discourses in rhyme grew more pleasing when they were broken into couplets, and that verse consisted not only in the number but the arrangement of syllables.

But though they did much, who can deny that they left much to do ? Their works were not many, nor were their  
30 minds of very ample comprehension. More examples of more modes of composition were necessary for the establishment of regularity, and the introduction of propriety in word and thought.

Every language of a learned nation necessarily divides itself into diction scholastick and popular, grave and

familiar, elegant and gross; and from a nice distinction of these different parts, arises a great part of the beauty of style. But if we except a few minds, the favourites of nature, to whom their own original rectitude was in the place of rules, this delicacy of selection was little known to our authors; our speech lay before them in a heap of confusion, and every man took for every purpose what chance might offer him.

There was therefore before the time of Dryden no poetical diction, no system of words at once refined from the grossness of domestick use, and free from the harshness of terms appropriated to particular arts. Words too familiar, or too remote, defeat the purpose of a poet. From those sounds which we hear on small or on coarse occasions, we do not easily receive strong impressions, or delightful images: and words to which we are nearly strangers, whenever they occur, draw that attention on themselves which they should transmit to things.

Those happy combinations of words which distinguish poetry from prose, had been rarely attempted; we had few elegances or flowers of speech, the roses had not yet been plucked from the bramble, or different colours had not been joined to enliven one another.

It may be doubted whether Waller and Denham could have over-borne the prejudices which had long prevailed, and which even then were sheltered by the protection of Cowley. The new versification, as it was called, may be considered as owing its establishment to Dryden; from whose time it is apparent that English poetry has had no tendency to relapse to its former savageness.

The affluence and comprehension of our language is very illustriously displayed in our poetical translations of Ancient Writers; a work which the French seem to relinquish in despair, and which we were long unable to perform with dexterity. Ben Jonson thought it necessary

to copy Horace almost word by word; Feltham, his contemporary and adversary, considers it as indispensably requisite in a translation to give line for line. It is said that Sandys, whom Dryden calls the best versifier of the last age, has struggled hard to comprise every book of his English Metamorphoses in the same number of verses with the original. Holyday had nothing in view but to shew that he understood his author, with so little regard to the grandeur of his diction, or the volubility of his  
10 numbers, that his metres can hardly be called verses; they cannot be read without reluctance, nor will the labour always be rewarded by understanding them. Cowley saw that such *copyers* were a *servile race*; he asserted his liberty, and spread his wings so boldly that he left his authors. It was reserved for Dryden to fix the limits of poetical liberty, and give us just rules and examples of translation.

When languages are formed upon different principles, it is impossible that the same modes of expression should  
20 always be elegant in both. While they run on together, the closest translation may be considered as the best; but when they divaricate, each must take its natural course. Where correspondence cannot be obtained, it is necessary to be content with something equivalent. *Translation therefore, says Dryden, is not so loose as paraphrase, nor so close as metaphrase.*

All polished languages have different styles; the concise, the diffuse, the lofty, and the humble. In the proper choice of style consists the resemblance which Dryden  
30 principally exacts from the translator. He is to exhibit his author's thoughts in such a dress of diction as the author would have given them, had his language been English: rugged magnificence is not to be softened: hyperbolical ostentation is not to be repressed, nor sententious affectation to have its point blunted. A trans-

lator is to be like his author: it is not his business to excel him.

The reasonableness of these rules seems sufficient for their vindication; and the effects produced by observing them were so happy, that I know not whether they were ever opposed but by Sir Edward Sherburne, a man whose learning was greater than his powers of poetry; and who, being better qualified to give the meaning than the spirit of Seneca, has introduced his version of three tragedies by a defence of close translation. The authority of Horace, 10 which the new translators cited in defence of their practice, he has, by a judicious explanation, taken fairly from them; but reason wants not Horace to support it.

It seldom happens that all the necessary causes concur to any great effect: will is wanting to power, or power to will, or both are impeded by external obstructions. The exigences in which Dryden was condemned to pass his life, are reasonably supposed to have blasted his genius, to have driven out his works in a state of immaturity, and to have intercepted the full-blown elegance which longer growth 20 would have supplied.

Poverty, like other rigid powers, is sometimes too hastily accused. If the excellence of Dryden's works was lessened by his indigence, their number was increased; and I know not how it will be proved, that if he had written less he would have undergone the toil of an author, if he had not been solicited by something more pressing than the love of praise.

But as is said by his Sebastian,

“What had been, is unknown; what is, appears.”

We know that Dryden's several productions were so many 30 successive expedients for his support; his plays were therefore often borrowed, and his poems were almost all occasional.

In an occasional performance no height of excellence can



be expected from any mind, however fertile in itself, and however stored with acquisitions. He whose work is general and arbitrary, has the choice of his matter, and takes that which his inclination and his studies have best qualified him to display and decorate. He is at liberty to delay his publication, till he has satisfied his friends and himself; till he has reformed his first thoughts by subsequent examination; and polished away those faults which the precipitance of ardent composition is likely to leave behind it. Virgil is related to have poured out a great number of lines in the morning, and to have passed the day in reducing them to fewer.

The occasional poet is circumscribed by the narrowness of his subject. Whatever can happen to man has happened so often, that little remains for fancy or invention. We have been all born; we have most of us been married; and so many have died before us, that our deaths can supply but few materials for a poet. In the fate of princes the publick has an interest; and what happens to them of good or evil, the poets have always considered as business for the Muse. But after so many inaugural gratulations, nuptial hymns, and funeral dirges, he must be highly favoured by nature, or by fortune, who says any thing not said before. Even war and conquest, however splendid, suggest no new images; the triumphal chariot of a victorious monarch can be decked only with those ornaments that have graced his predecessors.

Not only matter but time is wanting. The poem must not be delayed till the occasion is forgotten. The lucky moments of animated imagination cannot be attended; elegances and illustrations cannot be multiplied by gradual accumulation: the composition must be dispatched while conversation is yet busy, and admiration fresh; and haste is to be made, lest some other event should lay hold upon mankind.

Occasional composition may however secure to a writer

the praise both of learning and facility ; for they cannot be the effect of long study, and must be furnished immediately from the treasures of the mind.

The death of Cromwell was the first publick event which called forth Dryden's poetical powers. His heroick stanzas have beauties and defects ; the thoughts are vigorous, and though not always proper, shew a mind replete with ideas ; the numbers are smooth, and the diction, if not altogether correct, is elegant and easy.

Davenant was perhaps at this time his favourite author 10 though Gondibert never appears to have been popular ; and from Davenant he learned to please his ear with the stanza of four lines alternately rhymed.

Dryden very early formed his versification : there are in this early production no traces of Donne's or Jonson's ruggedness ; but he did not so soon free his mind from the ambition of forced conceits. In his verses on the Restoration, he says of the King's exile,

“ He, toss'd by Fate—  
Could taste no sweets of youth's desired age,  
But found his life too true a pilgrimage.” 20

And afterwards, to shew how virtue and wisdom are increased by adversity, he makes this remark :

“ Well might the ancient poets then confer  
On Night the honour'd name of *counsellor*,  
Since, struck with rays of prosperous fortune blind,  
We light alone in dark afflictions find.”

His praise of Monk's dexterity comprises such a cluster of thoughts unallied to one another, as will not elsewhere be easily found :

“ 'Twas Monk, whom Providence design'd to loose  
Those real bonds false freedom did impose.  
The blessed saints that watch'd this turning scene,  
Did from their stars with joyful wonder lean,

To see small clues draw vastest weights along,  
 Not in their bulk, but in their order strong.  
 Thus pencils can by one slight touch restore  
 Smiles to that changed face that wept before.  
 With ease such fond chimeras we pursue,  
 As fancy frames for fancy to subdue :  
 But, when ourselves to action we betake,  
 It shuns the mint like gold that chymists make ;  
 How hard was then his task, at once to be  
 10 What in the body natural we see !  
 Man's Architect distinctly did ordain  
 The charge of muscles, nerves, and of the brain,  
 Through viewless conduits spirits to dispense  
 The springs of motion from the seat of sense.  
 'Twas not the hasty product of a day,  
 But the well-ripen'd fruit of wise delay.  
 He, like a patient angler, ere he strook,  
 Would let them play a-while upon the hook.  
 Our healthful food the stomach labours thus,  
 20 At first embracing what it straight doth crush.  
 Wise leeches will not vain receipts obtrude,  
 While growing pains pronounce the humours crude ;  
 Deaf to complaints, they wait upon the ill,  
 Till some safe crisis authorize their skill."

He had not yet learned, indeed he never learned well, to  
 forbear the improper use of mythology. After having re-  
 warded the heathen deities for their care,

" With *Alga* who the sacred altar strows ?  
 To all the sea-gods Charles an offering owes ;  
 30 A bull to thee, Portunus, shall be slain,  
 A ram to you, ye Tempests of the Main."

He tells us, in the language of religion,

" Prayer storm'd the skies, and ravish'd Charles from thence,  
 As heaven itself is took by violence."

And afterwards mentions one of the most awful passages  
 of Sacred History.

Other conceits there are, too curious to be quite omitted ;  
as,

“ For by example most we sinn’d before,  
And, glass-like, clearness mix’d with frailty bore.”

How far he was yet from thinking it necessary to found  
his sentiments on Nature, appears from the extravagance  
of his fictions and hyperboles :

“ The winds, that never moderation knew,  
Afraid to blow too much, too faintly blew ;  
Or, out of breath with joy, could not enlarge      10  
Their straiten’d lungs.—  
It is no longer motion cheats your view ;  
As you meet it, the land approacheth you ;  
The land returns, and in the white it wears  
The marks of penitence and sorrow bears.”

I know not whether this fancy, however little be its value,  
was not borrowed. A French poet read to Malherbe some  
verses, in which he represents France as moving out of its  
place to receive the king. “ Though this,” said Malherbe,  
“ was in my time, I do not remember it.”      20

His poem on the “ Coronation ” has a more even tenour  
of thought. Some lines deserve to be quoted :

“ You have already quench’d sedition’s brand,  
And zeal, that burnt it, only warms the land ;  
The jealous sects that durst not trust their cause  
So far from their own will as to the laws,  
Him for their umpire, and their synod take,  
And their appeal alone to Cæsar make.”

Here may be found one particle of that old versification,  
of which, I believe, in all his works, there is not another :      30

“ Nor is it duty, or our hope alone,  
Creates that joy, but full *fruition*.”

In the verses to the lord chancellor Clarendon, two years  
afterwards, is a conceit so hopeless at the first view, that

few would have attempted it ; and so successfully laboured, that though at last it gives the reader more perplexity than pleasure, and seems hardly worth the study that it costs, yet it must be valued as a proof of a mind at once subtle and comprehensive :

10       “ In open prospect nothing bounds our eye,  
           Until the earth seems join'd unto the sky :  
           So in this hemisphere our outmost view  
           Is only bounded by our king and you :  
           Our sight is limited where you are join'd,  
           And beyond that no farther heaven can find.  
           So well your virtues do with his agree,  
           That, though your orbs of different greatness be,  
           Yet both are for each other's use dispos'd,  
           His to enclose, and yours to be enclos'd.  
           Nor could another in your room have been,  
           Except an emptiness had come between.”

The comparison of the Chancellor to the Indies leaves all resemblance too far behind it :

20       “ And as the Indies were not found before  
           Those rich perfumes which from the happy shore  
           The winds upon their balmy wings convey'd,  
           Whose guilty sweetness first their world betray'd ;  
           So by your counsels we are brought to view  
           A new and undiscover'd world in you.”

There is another comparison, for there is little else in the poem, of which, though perhaps it cannot be explained into plain prosaick meaning, the mind perceives enough to be delighted, and readily forgives its obscurity, for its  
 30 magnificence :

          “ How strangely active are the arts of peace,  
           Whose restless motions less than wars do cease :  
           Peace is not freed from labour, but from noise ;  
           And war more force, but not more pains employs :  
           Such is the mighty swiftness of your mind,  
           That, like the earth's, it leaves out sense behind,

While you so smoothly turn and rowl our sphere,  
That rapid motion does but rest appear.  
For as in nature's swiftness, with the throng,  
Of flying orbs while ours is borne along,  
All seems at rest to the deluded eye,  
Mov'd by the soul of the same harmony :  
So carry'd on by our unwearied care,  
We rest in peace, and yet in motion share."

To this succeed four lines, which perhaps afford Dryden's first attempt at those penetrating remarks on human nature, for which he seems to have been peculiarly formed :

" Let envy then those crimes within you see,  
From which the happy never must be free ;  
Envy that does with misery reside,  
The joy and the revenge of ruin'd pride."

Into this poem he seems to have collected all his powers ; and after this he did not often bring upon his anvil such stubborn and unmalleable thoughts ; but, as a specimen of his abilities to unite the most unsociable matter, he has concluded with lines, of which I think not myself obliged to tell the meaning :

" Yet unimpair'd with labours, or with time,  
Your age but seems to a new youth to climb.  
Thus heavenly bodies do our time beget,  
And measure change, but share no part of it :  
And still it shall without a weight increase,  
Like this new year, whose motions never cease.  
For since the glorious course you have begun  
Is led by Charles, as that is by the sun,  
It must both weightless and immortal prove,  
Because the centre of it is above."

30

In the " Annus Mirabilis " he returned to the quatrain, which from that time he totally quitted, perhaps from this experience of its inconvenience, for he complains of its difficulty. This is one of his greatest attempts. He had

subjects equal to his abilities, a great naval war, and the Fire of London. Battles have always been described in heroick poetry; but a sea-fight and artillery had yet something of novelty. New arts are long in the world before poets describe them; for they borrow everything from their predecessors, and commonly derive very little from nature or from life. Boileau was the first French writer that had ever hazarded in verse the mention of modern war, or the effects of gunpowder. We, who are  
 10 less afraid of novelty, had already possession of those dreadful images: Waller had described a sea-fight. Milton had not yet transferred the invention of fire-arms to the rebellious angels.

This poem is written with great diligence, yet does not fully answer the expectation raised by such subjects and such a writer. With the stanza of Davenant he has sometimes his vein of parenthesis, and incidental disquisition, and stops his narrative for a wise remark.

The general fault is, that he affords more sentiment than  
 20 description, and does not so much impress scenes upon the fancy, as deduce consequences and make comparisons.

The initial stanzas have rather too much resemblance to the first lines of Waller's poem on the war with Spain; perhaps such a beginning is natural, and could not be avoided without affectation. Both Waller and Dryden might take their hint from the poem on the civil war of Rome, *Orbem jam totum*, &c.

Of the king collecting his navy, he says,

30        "It seems as every ship their sovereign knows,  
               His awful summons they so soon obey;  
       So hear the scaly herds when Proteus blows,  
               And so to pasture follow through the sea."

It would not be hard to believe that Dryden had written the two first lines seriously, and that some wag had added

the two latter in burlesque. Who would expect the lines that immediately follow, which are indeed perhaps indecently hyperbolic, but certainly in a mode totally different ?

“ To see this fleet upon the ocean move,  
Angels drew wide the curtains of the skies ;  
And heaven, as if there wanted lights above,  
For tapers made two glaring comets rise.”

The description of the attempt at Bergen will afford a very compleat specimen of the descriptions in this poem : 10

“ And now approach’d their fleet from India, fraught  
With all the riches of the rising sun :  
And precious sand from southern climates brought,  
The fatal regions where the war begun.

Like hunted castors, conscious of their store,  
Their way-laid wealth to Norway’s coast they bring :  
Then first the North’s cold bosom spices bore,  
And winter brooded on the eastern spring.

By the rich scent we found our perfum’d prey,  
Which, flank’d with rocks, did close in covert lie : 20  
And round about their murdering cannon lay,  
At once to threaten and invite the eye.

Fiercer than cannon, and than rocks more hard,  
The English undertake th’ unequal war :  
Seven ships alone, by which the port is barr’d,  
Besiege the Indies, and all Denmark dare.

These fight like husbands, but like lovers those :  
These fain would keep, and those more fain enjoy :  
And to such height their frantic passion grows,  
That what both love, both hazard to destroy : 30

Amidst whole heaps of spices lights a ball,  
And now their odours arm’d against them fly :  
Some preciously by shatter’d porcelain fall,  
And some by aromatic splinters die.



And though by tempests of the prize bereft,  
 In heaven's inclemency some ease we find :  
 Our foes we vanquish'd by our valour left,  
 And only yielded to the seas and wind."

In this manner is the sublime too often mingled with the ridiculous. The Dutch seek a shelter for a wealthy fleet: this surely needed no illustration; yet they must fly, not like all the rest of mankind on the same occasion, but *like hunted castors*; and they might with strict propriety be hunted; for we winded them by our noses—their *perfumes* betrayed them. The *Husband* and the *Lover*, though of more dignity than the Castor, are images too domestick to mingle properly with the horrors of war. The two quatrains that follow are worthy of the author.

The account of the different sensations with which the two fleets retired, when the night parted them, is one of the fairest flowers of English poetry.

20        " The night comes on, we eager to pursue  
              The combat still, and they asham'd to leave :  
      'Till the last streaks of dying day withdrew,  
              And doubtful moonlight did our rage deceive.  
      In th' English fleet each ship resounds with joy,  
              And loud applause of their great leader's fame :  
      In fiery dreams the Dutch they still destroy,  
              And, slumbering, smile at the imagin'd flame.  
      Not so the Holland fleet, who, tir'd and done,  
              Stretch'd on their decks like weary oxen lie ;  
      Faint sweats all down their mighty members run,  
              (Vast bulks, which little souls but ill supply.)  
      In dreams they fearful precipices tread,  
      Or, shipwreck'd, labour to some distant shore :  
      Or, in dark churches, walk among the dead ;  
              They wake with horror, and dare sleep no more."

It is a general rule in poetry, that all appropriated terms of art should be sunk in general expressions, because poetry is to speak an universal language. This rule is still

stronger with regard to arts not liberal, or confined to few, and therefore far removed from common knowledge; and of this kind, certainly, is technical navigation. Yet Dryden was of opinion that a sea-fight ought to be described in the nautical language; *and certainly, says he, as those who in a logical disputation keep to general terms would hide a fallacy, so those who do it in any poetical description would veil their ignorance.*

Let us then appeal to experience; for by experience at last we learn as well what will please as what will profit. 10  
In the battle, his terms seem to have been blown away; but he deals them liberally in the dock:

“So here some pick out bullets from the side,  
Some drive old *okum* thro’ each *seam* and rift:  
Their left-hand does the *calking-iron* guide,  
The rattling *mallet* with the right they lift.

With boiling pitch another near at hand  
(From friendly Sweden brought) the *seams instops*.  
Which, well laid o’er, the salt-sea waves withstand,  
And shake them from the rising beak in drops. 20

Some the *gall’d* ropes with dawby *marling* bind,  
Or sear-cloth masts with strong *tarpawling* coats:  
To try new *shrouds* one mounts into the wind,  
And one below, their ease or stiffness notes.”

I suppose here is not one term which every reader does not wish away.

His digression to the original and progress of navigation, with his prospect of the advancement which it shall receive from the Royal Society, then newly instituted, may be considered as an example seldom equalled of seasonable ex- 30  
cursion and artful return.

One line, however, leaves me discontented; he says, that by the help of the philosophers,

“Instructed ships shall sail to quick commerce,  
By which remotest regions are allied.—”

Which he is constrained to explain in a note, *By a more exact measure of longitude*. It had better become Dryden's learning and genius to have laboured science into poetry, and have shewn, by explaining longitude, that verse did not refuse the ideas of philosophy

His description of the Fire is painted by resolute meditation, out of a mind better formed to reason than to feel. The conflagration of a city, with all its tumults of concomitant distress, is one of the most dreadful spectacles which  
 10 this world can offer to human eyes ; yet it seems to raise little emotion in the breast of the poet ; he watches the flame coolly from street to street, with now a reflection, and now a simile, till at last he meets the king, for whom he makes a speech, rather tedious in a time so busy ; and then follows again the progress of the fire.

There are, however, in this part some passages that deserve attention ; as in the beginning :

20                   “ The diligence of trades and noiseful gain  
                     And luxury more late asleep were laid ;  
                     All was the night's, and in her silent reign  
                     No sound the rest of Nature did invade  
                     In this deep quiet—”

The expression “ All was the night's ” is taken from Seneca, who remarks on Virgil's line,

“ *Omnia noctis erant placida composita quiete,*”

that he might have concluded better,

“ *Omnia noctis erant.*”

The following quatrain is vigorous and animated :

30                   “ The ghosts of traytors from the bridge descend  
                     With bold fanatick spectres to rejoice ;  
                     About the fire into a dance they bend,  
                     And sing their sabbath notes with feeble voice.”

His prediction of the improvements which shall be made

in the new city, is elegant and poetical, and, with an event which Poets cannot always boast, has been happily verified. The poem concludes with a simile that might have better been omitted.

Dryden, when he wrote this poem, seems not yet fully to have formed his versification, or settled his system of propriety.

From this time, he addicted himself almost wholly to the stage, *to which*, says he, *my genius never much inclined me*, merely as the most profitable market for poetry. By <sup>10</sup> writing tragedies in rhyme, he continued to improve his diction and his numbers. According to the opinion of *Harte*, who had studied his works with great attention, he settled his principles of versification in 1676, when he produced the play of "Aureng Zeb;" and according to his own account of the short time in which he wrote "Tyrannick Love," and the "State of Innocence," he soon obtained the full effect of diligence, and added facility to exactness.

Rhyme has been so long banished from the theatre, that <sup>20</sup> we know not its effect upon the passions of an audience; but it has this convenience, that sentences stand more independent on each other, and striking passages are therefore easily selected and retained. Thus the description of Night in the "Indian Emperor," and the rise and fall of empire in the "Conquest of Granada," are more frequently repeated than any lines in "All for Love," or "Don Sebastian."

To search his plays for vigorous sallies, and sententious elegances, or to fix the dates of any little pieces which he <sup>30</sup> wrote by chance, or by solicitation, were labour too tedious and minute.

His dramatic labours did not so wholly absorb his thoughts, but that he promulgated the laws of translation in a preface to the English Epistles of Ovid; one of which

he translated himself, and another in conjunction with the Earl of Mulgrave.

“Absalom and Achitophel” is a work so well known, that particular criticism is superfluous. If it be considered as a poem political and controversial, it will be found to comprise all the excellences of which the subject is susceptible; acrimony of censure, elegance of praise, artful delineation of characters, variety and vigour of sentiment, happy turns of language, and pleasing harmony of numbers; and all  
10 these raised to such a height as can scarcely be found in any other English composition.

It is not, however, without faults; some lines are inelegant or improper, and too many are irreligiously licentious. The original structure of the poem was defective; allegories drawn to great length will always break; Charles could not run continually parallel with David.

The subject had likewise another inconvenience: it admitted little imagery or description, and a long poem of mere sentiments easily becomes tedious; though all the parts are  
20 forcible, and every line kindles new rapture, the reader, if not relieved by the interposition of something that soothes the fancy, grows weary of admiration, and defers the rest.

As an approach to historical truth was necessary, the action and catastrophe were not in the poet's power; there is therefore an unpleasing disproportion between the beginning and the end. We are alarmed by a faction formed out of many sects various in their principles, but agreeing in their purpose of mischief, formidable for their numbers, and strong by their supports, while the king's friends are  
30 few and weak. The chiefs on either part are set forth to view; but when expectation is at the height, the king makes a speech, and

“Henceforth a series of new times began.”

Who can forbear to think of an enchanted castle, with

a wide moat and lofty battlements, walls of marble and gates of brass, which vanishes at once into air, when the destined knight blows his horn before it?

In the second part, written by *Tate*, there is a long insertion, which, for poignancy of satire, exceeds any part of the former. Personal resentment, though no laudable motive to satire, can add great force to general principles. Self-love is a busy prompter.

The "Medal," written upon the same principles with "Absalom and Achitophel," but upon a narrower plan, 10 gives less pleasure, though it discovers equal abilities in the writer. The superstructure cannot extend beyond the foundation; a single character or incident cannot furnish as many ideas, as a series of events, or multiplicity of agents. This poem therefore, since time has left it to itself, is not much read, nor perhaps generally understood, yet it abounds with touches both of humorous and serious satire. The picture of a man whose propensions to mischief are such, that his best actions are but inability of wickedness, is very skilfully delineated and strongly 20 coloured.

"Power was his aim : but, thrown from that pretence, }  
 The wretch turn'd loyal in his own defence, }  
 And malice reconcil'd him to his Prince.  
 Him, in the anguish of his soul, he serv'd ;  
 Rewarded faster still than he deserv'd :  
 Behold him now exalted into trust ;  
 His counsels oft convenient, seldom just.  
 Ev'n in the most sincere advice he gave,  
 He had a grudging still to be a knave.  
 The frauds he learnt in his fanatic years,  
 Made him uneasy in his lawful gears :  
 At least as little honest as he cou'd :  
 And, like white witches, mischievously good.  
 To this first bias, longingly, he leans ;  
 And rather would be great by wicked means."

30

The "Threnodia," which, by a term I am afraid neither

authorized nor analogical, he calls "Augustalis," is not among his happiest productions. Its first and obvious defect is the irregularity of its metre, to which the ears of that age, however, were accustomed. What is worse, it has neither tenderness nor dignity, it is neither magnificent nor pathetick. He seems to look round him for images which he cannot find, and what he has he distorts by endeavouring to enlarge them. He is, he says, *petrified with grief*; but the marble sometimes relents, and trickles in a  
 10 joke.

"The sons of art all med'cines try'd,  
 And every noble remedy apply'd ;  
 With emulation each essay'd  
 His utmost skill ; *nay more they pray'd* :  
 Was never losing game with better conduct play'd."

He had been a little inclined to merriment before upon the prayers of a nation for their dying sovereign, nor was he serious enough to keep heathen fables out of his religion.

20        "With him th' innumerable croud of armed prayers  
           Knock'd at the gates of heaven, and knock'd aloud ;  
           *The first well-meaning rude petitioners,*  
           All for his life assail'd the throne,  
           All would have brib'd the skies by offering up their own.  
           So great a throng not heaven itself could bar ;  
           'Twas almost borne by force *as in a giants war*.  
           The prayers, at least, for his reprieve were heard ;  
           His death, like Hezekiah's, was deferr'd."

There is throughout the composition a desire of splendor  
 30 without wealth. In the conclusion he seems too much pleased with the prospect of the new reign to have lamented his old master with much sincerity.

He did not miscarry in this attempt for want of skill either in lyrick or elegiack poetry. His poem *on the death of Mrs. Killigrew*, is undoubtedly the noblest ode that our language ever has produced. The first part flows with a

torrent of enthusiasm. *Fervet immensusque ruit.* All the stanzas indeed are not equal. An imperial crown cannot be one continued diamond; the gems must be held together by some less valuable matter.

In his first ode for Cecilia's day, which is lost in the splendor of the second, there are passages which would have dignified any other poet. The first stanza is vigorous and elegant, though the word *diapason* is too technical, and the rhymes are too remote from one another.

“ From harmony, from heavenly harmony, 10  
 This universal frame began :  
 When nature underneath a heap of jarring atoms lay,  
 And could not heave her head,  
 The tuneful voice was heard from high,  
 Arise ye more than dead.  
 Then cold and hot, and moist and dry,  
 In order to their stations leap,  
 And musick's power obey.  
 From harmony, from heavenly harmony,  
 This universal frame began : 20  
 From harmony to harmony  
 Through all the compass of the notes it ran,  
 The diapason closing full in man.”

The conclusion is likewise striking, but it includes an image so awful in itself, that it can owe little to poetry; and I could wish the antithesis of *musick untuning* had found some other place.

“ As from the power of sacred lays  
 The spheres began to move,  
 And sung the great Creator's praise 30  
 To all the bless'd above.  
 So when the last and dreadful hour  
 This crumbling pageant shall devour,  
 The trumpet shall be heard on high,  
 The dead shall live, the living die,  
 And musick shall untune the sky.”

Of his skill in Elegy he has given a specimen in his



“Eleonora,” of which the following lines discover their author.

“Though all these rare endowments of the mind  
 Were in a narrow space of life confin’d,  
 The figure was with full perfection crown’d;  
 Though not so large an orb, as truly round:  
 As when in glory, through the public place,  
 The spoils of conquer’d nations were to pass,  
 And but one day for triumph was allow’d,  
 10 The consul was constrain’d his pomp to crowd;  
 And so the swift procession hurry’d on,  
 That all, though not distinctly, might be shown:  
 So in the straiten’d bounds of life confin’d,  
 She gave but glimpses of her glorious mind:  
 And multitudes of virtues pass’d along;  
 Each pressing foremost in the mighty throng,  
 Ambitious to be seen, and then make room  
 For greater multitudes that were to come.  
 Yet unemploy’d no minute slipp’d away;  
 20 Moments were precious in so short a stay.  
 The haste of heaven to have her was so great,  
 That some were single acts, though each compleat;  
 And every act stood ready to repeat.” }

This piece, however, is not without its faults; there is so much likeness in the initial comparison, that there is no illustration. As a king would be lamented, Eleonora was lamented.

“As when some great and gracious monarch dies,  
 Soft whispers, first, and mournful murmurs rise  
 30 Among the sad attendants; then the sound  
 Soon gathers voice, and spreads the news around,  
 Through town and country, till the dreadful blast  
 Is blown to distant colonies at last;  
 Who, then, perhaps, were offering vows in vain,  
 For his long life, and for his happy reign:  
 So slowly by degrees, unwilling fame  
 Did matchless Eleonora’s fate proclaim,  
 Till publick as the loss the news became.” }

This is little better than to say in praise of a shrub, that

it is as green as a tree, or of a brook, that it waters a garden, as a river waters a country.

Dryden confesses that he did not know the lady whom he celebrates; the praise being therefore inevitably general, fixes no impression upon the reader, nor excites any tendency to love, nor much desire of imitation. Knowledge of the subject is to the poet, what durable materials are to the architect.

The "Religio Laici," which borrows its title from the "Religio Medici" of Browne, is almost the only work of 10 Dryden which can be considered as a voluntary effusion; in this, therefore, it might be hoped, that the full effulgence of his genius would be found. But unhappily the subject is rather argumentative than poetical: he intended only a specimen of metrical disputation.

" And this unpolish'd rugged verse I chose,  
As fittest for discourse, and nearest prose."

This, however, is a composition of great excellence in its kind, in which the familiar is very properly diversified with the solemn, and the grave with the humorous; in which 20 metre has neither weakened the force, nor clouded the perspicuity of argument; nor will it be easy to find another example equally happy of this middle kind of writing, which, though prosaick in some parts, rises to high poetry in others, and neither towers to the skies, nor creeps along the ground.

Of the same kind, or not far distant from it, is the "Hind and Panther," the longest of all Dryden's original poems; an allegory intended to comprize and to decide the controversy between the Romanists and Protestants. The 30 scheme of the work is injudicious and incommodious; for what can be more absurd than that one beast should counsel another to rest her faith upon a pope and council? He seems well enough skilled in the usual topicks of argu-

ment, endeavours to shew the necessity of an infallible judge, and reproaches the Reformers with want of unity; but is weak enough to ask, why since we see without knowing how, we may not have an infallible judge without knowing where.

The *Hind* at one time is afraid to drink at the common brook, because she may be worried; but walking home with the *Panther*, talks by the way of the *Nicene Fathers*, and at last declares herself to be the Catholic church.

- 10 This absurdity was very properly ridiculed in the "City Mouse and Country Mouse" of *Montague* and *Prior*; and in the detection and censure of the incongruity of the fiction, chiefly consists the value of their performance, which, whatever reputation it might obtain by the help of temporary passions, seems to readers almost a century distant, not very forcible or animated.

Pope, whose judgment was perhaps a little bribed by the subject, used to mention this poem as the most correct specimen of Dryden's versification. It was indeed written  
20 when he had completely formed his manner, and may be supposed to exhibit, negligence excepted, his deliberate and ultimate scheme of metre.

We may therefore reasonably infer, that he did not approve the perpetual uniformity which confines the sense to couplets, since he has broken his lines in the initial paragraph.

- 30 "A milk-white Hind, immortal and unchang'd,  
Fed on the lawns, and in the forest rang'd;  
Without unspotted, innocent within,  
She fear'd no danger, for she knew no sin.  
Yet had she oft been chac'd with horns and hounds  
And Scythian shafts, and many winged wounds  
Aim'd at her heart; was often forc'd to fly,  
And doom'd to death, though fated not to die."

These lines are lofty, elegant, and musical, notwith-

standing the interruption of the pause, of which the effect is rather increase of pleasure by variety, than offence by ruggedness.

To the first part it was his intention, he says, *to give the majestick turn of heroick poesy* ; and perhaps he might have executed his design not unsuccessfully, had not an opportunity of satire, which we cannot forbear, fallen sometimes in his way. The character of a Presbyterian, whose emblem is the *Wolf*, is not very heroically majestick.

“ More haughty than the rest, the wolfish race  
 Appear with belly gaunt and famish'd face :  
 Never was so deform'd a beast of grace.  
 His ragged tail betwixt his legs he wears,  
 Close clapp'd for shame ; but his rough crest he rears,  
 And pricks up his predestinating ears.”

His general character of the other sorts of beasts that never go to church, though spritely and keen, has, however, not much of heroick poesy,

“ These are the chief ; to number o’er the rest,  
 And stand like Adam naming every beast, 20  
 Were weary work ; nor will the Muse describe  
 A slimy-born, and sun-begotten tribe ;  
 Who, far from steeples and their sacred sound,  
 In fields their sullen conventicles found.  
 These gross, half-animated, lumps I leave ;  
 Nor can I think what thoughts they can conceive ;  
 But if they think at all, ’tis sure no higher  
 Than matter, put in motion, may aspire ;  
 Souls that can scarce ferment their mass of clay  
 So drossy, so divisible are they, 30  
 As would but serve pure bodies for allay :  
 Such souls as shards produce, such beetle things  
 As only buz to heaven with evening wings ;  
 Strike in the dark, offending but by chance ;  
 Such are the blindfold blows of ignorance.  
 They know not beings, and but hate a name ;  
 To them the Hind and Panther are the same.”

One more instance, and that taken from the narrative part, where style was more in his choice, will show how steadily he kept his resolution of heroick dignity.

10       “ For when the herd, suffic'd, did late repair  
           To ferney heaths, and to their forest laire,  
           She made a mannerly excuse to stay,  
           Proffering the Hind to wait her half the way :  
           That, since the sky was clear, an hour of talk  
           Might help her to beguile the tedious walk.  
           With much good-will the motion was embrac'd,  
           To chat awhile on their adventures past :  
           Nor had the grateful Hind so soon forgot  
           Her friend and fellow-sufferer in the Plot.  
           Yet, wondering how of late she grew estrang'd,  
           Her forehead cloudy and her count'nance chang'd,  
           She thought this hour th' occasion would present  
           To learn her secret cause of discontent,  
           Which well she hop'd, might be with ease redress'd,       }  
 20       Considering her a well-bred civil beast,       }  
           And more a gentlewoman than the rest.  
           After some common talk what rumours ran,  
           The lady of the spotted muff began.”

The second and third parts he professes to have reduced to diction more familiar and more suitable to dispute and conversation ; the difference is not, however, very easily perceived : the first has familiar, and the two others have sonorous, lines. The original incongruity runs through the whole ; the king is now *Cæsar*, and now the *Lyon* ; and the name *Pan* is given to the Supreme Being.

30   But when this constitutional absurdity is forgiven, the poem must be confessed to be written with great smoothness of metre, a wide extent of knowledge, and an abundant multiplicity of images ; the controversy is embellished with pointed sentences, diversified by illustrations, and enlivened by sallies of invective. Some of the facts to which allusions are made, are now become obscure, and perhaps there may be many satirical passages little understood.

As it was by its nature a work of defiance, a composition which would naturally be examined with the utmost acrimony of criticism, it was probably laboured with uncommon attention; and there are, indeed, few negligences in the subordinate parts. The original impropriety, and the subsequent unpopularity of the subject, added to the ridiculousness of its first elements, has sunk it into neglect; but it may be usefully studied, as an example of poetical ratiocination, in which the argument suffers little from the metre.

10

In the poem on "The Birth of the Prince of Wales," nothing is very remarkable but the exorbitant adulation, and that insensibility of the precipice on which the king was then standing, which the laureate apparently shared with the rest of the courtiers. A few months cured him of controversy, dismissed him from court, and made him again a play-wright and translator.

Of Juvenal there had been a translation by Stapylton, and another by Holyday; neither of them is very poetical. Stapylton is more smooth, and Holyday's is more esteemed 20 for the learning of his notes. A new version was proposed to the poets of that time, and undertaken by them in conjunction. The main design was conducted by Dryden, whose reputation was such that no man was unwilling to serve the Muses under him.

The general character of this translation will be given, when it is said to preserve the wit, but to want the dignity of the original. The peculiarity of Juvenal is a mixture of gaiety and stateliness, of pointed sentences and declamatory grandeur. His points have not been 30 neglected; but his grandeur none of the band seemed to consider as necessary to be imitated, except *Creech*, who undertook the thirteenth satire. It is therefore perhaps possible to give a better representation of that great satirist, even in those parts which Dryden himself

has translated, some passages excepted, which will never be excelled.

With Juvenal was published Persius, translated wholly by Dryden. This work, though like 'all the other productions of Dryden it may have shining parts, seems to have been written merely for wages, in an uniform mediocrity, without any eager endeavour after excellence, or laborious effect of the mind.

There wanders an opinion among the readers of  
10 poetry, that one of these satires is an exercise of the school. Dryden says that he once translated it at school; but not that he preserved or published the juvenile performance.

Not long afterwards he undertook perhaps the most arduous work of its kind, a translation of Virgil, for which he had shewn how well he was qualified by his version of the "Pollio," and two episodes, one of Nisus and Euryalus, the other of Mezentius and Lausus.

In the comparison of Homer and Virgil, the discrimina-  
20 tive excellence of Homer is elevation and comprehension of thought, and that of Virgil is grace and splendor of diction. The beauties of Homer are therefore difficult to be lost, and those of Virgil difficult to be retained. The massy trunk of sentiment is safe by its solidity, but the blossoms of elocution easily drop away. The author, having the choice of his own images, selects those which he can best adorn: the translator must, at all hazards, follow his original, and express thoughts which perhaps he would not have chosen. When to this primary difficulty is added the  
30 inconvenience of a language so much inferior in harmony to the Latin, it cannot be expected that they who read the "Georgick" and the "Eneid" should be much delighted with any version.

All these obstacles Dryden saw, and all these he determined to encounter. The expectation of his work was

undoubtedly great; the nation considered its honour as interested in the event. One gave him the different editions of his author, and another helped him in the subordinate parts. The arguments of the several books were given him by Addison.

The hopes of the publick were not disappointed. He produced, says Pope, *the most noble and spirited translation that I know in any language*. It certainly excelled whatever had appeared in English, and appears to have satisfied his friends, and, for the most part, to have silenced his enemies. 10 Milbourne, indeed, a clergyman, attacked it; but his outrages seem to be the ebullitions of a mind agitated by stronger resentment than bad poetry can excite, and previously resolved not to be pleased.

His criticism extends only to the Preface, Pastorals, and Georgicks; and, as he professes, to give his antagonist an opportunity of reprisal, he has added his own version of the first and fourth Pastorals, and the first Georgick. The world has forgotten his book; but since his attempt has given him a place in literary history, I will preserve a 20 specimen of his criticism, by inserting his remarks on the invocation before the first Georgick, and of his poetry, by annexing his own version.

Ver. 1. "*What makes a plenteous harvest, when to turn, The fruitful soil, and when to sow the corn—It's unlucky, they say, to stumble at the threshold, but what has a plenteous harvest to do here? Virgil would not pretend to prescribe rules for that which depends not on the husbandman's care, but the disposition of Heaven altogether. Indeed, the plenteous crop depends somewhat on the good method of 30 tillage, and where the land's ill manur'd, the corn, without a miracle, can be but indifferent; but the harvest may be good, which is its properest epithet, tho' the husbandman's skill were never so indifferent. The next sentence is too literal, and when to plough had been Virgil's meaning, and*



intelligible to every body ; and *when to sow the corn* is a needless *addition*."

Ver. 3. "*The care of sheep, of oxen, and of kine, And when to geld the lambs, and sheer the swine,* would as well have fallen under the *cura boum, qui cultus habendo sit pecori*, as Mr. *D*'s deduction of particulars."

Ver. 5. "*The birth and genius of the frugal bee, I sing Mæcenas, and I sing to thee.*—But where did *experientia* ever signify *birth and genius*? or what ground was there  
10 for such a *figure* in this place? How much more manly is Mr. *Ogylby*'s version!

“ ‘ What makes rich grounds, in what celestial signs,  
’Tis good to plough, and marry elms with vines.  
What best fits cattle, what with sheep agrees,  
And several arts improving frugal bees,  
I sing, *Mæcenas*.’ ”

Which four lines, tho' faulty enough, are yet much more to the purpose than Mr. *D*'s six."

Ver. 22. "*From fields and mountains to my song repair.*  
20 For *patrium linquens nemus, saltusque Lycæi*—Very well explained!"

Ver. 23, 24. "*Inventor Pallas, of the fattening oil, Thou founder of the plough, and ploughman's toil!* Written as if *these* had been *Pallas's invention*. The *ploughman's toil's* impertinent."

Ver. 25. "—*The shroud-like cypress*—Why *shroud-like*? Is a *cypress* pulled up by the roots, which the *sculpture* in the last *Eclogue* fills *Silvanus's* hand with, so very like a *shroud*? Or did not Mr. *D*. think of that kind of *cypress*  
30 us'd often for *scarves and hatbands* at funerals formerly, or for *widow's vails*, &c. if so, 'twas a *deep good thought*."

Ver. 26. "—*That wear the royal honours, and increase the year*—What's meant by *increasing the year*? Did the gods or goddesses add more *months*, or *days*, or *hours* to it? Or how can *arva tueri*—signify to *wear rural honours*? Is

this to *translate*, or *abuse* an *author*? The next *couplet* are borrow'd from *Ogylby*, I suppose, because *less to the purpose* than ordinary."

Ver. 33. "*The patron of the world, and Rome's peculiar guard—Idle, and none of Virgil's, no more than the sense of the precedent couplet; so again, he interpolates Virgil with that and the round circle of the year to guide powerful of blessings, which thou strew'st around. A ridiculous Latinism, and an impertinent addition; indeed the whole period is but one piece of absurdity and nonsense, as those 10 who lay it with the original must find.*"

Ver. 42, 43. "*And Neptune shall resign the fasces of the sea. Was he consul or dictator there? And watry virgins for thy bed shall strive. Both absurd interpolations.*"

Ver. 47, 48. "*Where in the void of heaven a place is free. Ah happy D—n, were that place for thee! But where is that void? Or what does our translator mean by it? He knows what Ovid says God did, to prevent such a void in heaven; perhaps, this was then forgotten: but Virgil talks more sensibly.*"

20

Ver. 49. "*The scorpion ready to receive thy laws. No, he would not then have gotten out of his way so fast.*"

Ver. 56. "*Though Proserpine affects her silent seat—What made her then so angry with Ascalaphus, for preventing her return? She was now mus'd to Patience under the determinations of Fate, rather than fond of her residence.*"

Ver. 61, 2, 3. "*Pity the poet's, and the ploughman's cares, Interest thy greatness in our mean affairs. And use thyself betimes to hear our prayers. Which is such a wretched 30 perversion of Virgil's noble thought as Vicars would have blush'd at; but Mr. Ogylby makes us some amends, by his better lines:*

“ ‘O wheresoe’er thou art, from thence incline,  
And grant assistance to my bold design!

Pity with me, poor husbandmen's affairs,  
And now, as if translated, hear our prayers.'

This is *sense*, and *to the purpose*: the other, poor-*mistaken stuff*."

Such were the strictures of Milbourne, who found few abettors; and of whom it may be reasonably imagined, that many who favoured his design were ashamed of his insolence.

When admiration had subsided, the translation was more  
10 coolly examined, and found like all others, to be sometimes erroneous, and sometimes licentious. Those who could find faults, thought they could avoid them; and Dr. Brady attempted in blank verse a translation of the "*Æneid*," which, when dragged into the world, did not live long enough to cry. I have never seen it; but that such a version there is, or has been, perhaps some old catalogue informed me.

With not much better success, Trapp, when his Tragedy and his Prelections had given him reputation, attempted  
20 another blank version of the "*Æneid*;" to which, notwithstanding the slight regard with which it was treated, he had afterwards perseverance enough to add the "*Eclogues*," and "*Georgicks*." His book may continue its existence as long as it is the clandestine refuge of schoolboys.

Since the English ear has been accustomed to the mellifluence of Pope's numbers, and the diction of poetry has become more splendid, new attempts have been made to translate Virgil; and all his works have been attempted by men better qualified to contend with Dryden. I will  
30 not engage myself in an invidious comparison by opposing one passage to another; a work of which there would be no end, and which might be often offensive without use.

It is not by comparing line with line that the merit of great works is to be estimated, but by their general effects and ultimate result. It is easy to note a weak line, and

write one more vigorous in its place; to find a happiness of expression in the original, and transplant it by force into the version: but what is given to the parts, may be subducted from the whole, and the reader may be weary, though the critick may commend. Works of imagination excel by their allurements and delight; by their power of attracting and detaining the attention. That book is good in vain, which the reader throws away. He only is the master, who keeps the mind in pleasing captivity; whose pages are perused with eagerness, and in hope of new 10 pleasure are perused again; and whose conclusion is perceived with an eye of sorrow, such as the traveller casts upon departing day.

By his proportion of this predominance I will consent that Dryden should be tried; of this, which, in opposition to reason, makes Ariosto the darling and the pride of Italy; of this, which, in defiance of criticism, continues Shakspeare the sovereign of the drama.

His last work was his "Fables," in which he gave us the first example of a mode of writing which the Italians 20 call *refaccimento*, a renovation of ancient writers, by modernizing their language. Thus the old poem of Boiardo has been new-dressed by *Domenichi* and *Berni*. The works of Chaucer, upon which this kind of rejuvenescence has been bestowed by Dryden, require little criticism. The tale of the Cock seems hardly worth revival; and the story of "Palamon and Arcite," containing an action unsuitable to the times in which it is placed, can hardly be suffered to pass without censure of the hyperbolical commendation which Dryden has given it in the general 30 Preface, and in a poetical Dedication, a piece where his original fondness of remote conceits seems to have revived.

Of the three pieces borrowed from Boccace, "Sigismunda" may be defended by the celebrity of the story. "Theodore and Honoria," though it contains not much

moral, yet afforded opportunities of striking description. And "Cymon" was formerly a tale of such reputation, that, at the revival of letters, it was translated into Latin by one of the Beroalds.

Whatever subjects employed his pen, he was still improving our measures and embellishing our language.

In this volume are interspersed some short original poems, which, with his prologues, epilogues, and songs, may be comprised in Congreve's remark, that even those,  
10 if he had written nothing else, would have entitled him to the praise of excellence in his kind.

One composition must however be distinguished. The "Ode for St. Cecilia's Day," perhaps the last effort of his poetry, has been always considered as exhibiting the highest flight of fancy, and the exactest nicety of art. This is allowed to stand without a rival. If indeed there is any excellence beyond it, in some other of Dryden's works that excellence must be found. Compared with the "Ode on Killigrew," it may be pronounced perhaps superiour in  
20 the whole; but without any single part, equal to the first stanza of the other.

It is said to have cost Dryden a fortnight's labour; but it does not want its negligences: some of the lines are without correspondent rhymes; a defect, which I never detected but after an acquaintance of many years, and which the enthusiasm of the writer might hinder him from perceiving.

His last stanza has less emotion than the former; but is not less elegant in the diction. The conclusion is  
30 vicious; the musick of "Timotheus," which *raised a mortal to the skies*, had only a metaphorical power; that of "Cecilia," which *drew an angel down*, had a real effect: the crown therefore could not reasonably be divided.

In a general survey of Dryden's labours, he appears to

have a mind very comprehensive by nature, and much enriched with acquired knowledge. His compositions are the effects of a vigorous genius operating upon large materials.

The power that predominated in his intellectual operations, was rather strong reason than quick sensibility. Upon all occasions that were presented, he studied rather than felt, and produced sentiments not such as Nature enforces, but meditation supplies. With the simple and elemental passions, as they spring separate in the mind, 10 he seems not much acquainted; and seldom describes them but as they are complicated by the various relations of society, and confused in the tumults and agitations of life.

What he says of love may contribute to the explanation of his character :

“ Love various minds does variously inspire ;  
It stirs in gentle bosoms gentle fire,  
Like that of incense on the altar laid ;  
But raging flames tempestuous souls invade ; 20  
A fire which every windy passion blows,  
With pride it mounts, or with revenge it glows.”

Dryden's was not one of the *gentle bosoms* : Love, as it subsists in itself, with no tendency but to the person loved, and wishing only for correspondent kindness ; such love as shuts out all other interest ; the Love of the Golden Age, was too soft and subtle to put his faculties in motion. He hardly conceived it but in its turbulent effervescence with some other desires ; when it was inflamed by rivalry, or obstructed by difficulties : when it invigorated ambition, 30 or exasperated revenge.

He is therefore, with all his variety of excellence, not often pathetick ; and had so little sensibility of the power of effusions purely natural, that he did not esteem them in others. Simplicity gave him no pleasure ; and for the

first part of his life he looked on Otway with contempt, though at last, indeed very late, he confessed that in his play *there was Nature, which is the chief beauty.*

We do not always know our own motives. I am not certain whether it was not rather the difficulty which he found in exhibiting the genuine operations of the heart, than a servile submission to an injudicious audience, that filled his plays with false magnificence. It was necessary to fix attention; and the mind can be captivated only by  
10 recollection, or by curiosity; by reviving natural sentiments, or impressing new appearances of things: sentences were readier at his call than images; he could more easily fill the ear with some splendid novelty, than awaken those ideas that slumber in the heart.

The favourite exercise of his mind was ratiocination; and, that argument might not be too soon at an end, he delighted to talk of liberty and necessity, destiny and contingency; these he discusses in the language of the school with so much profundity, that the terms which he  
20 uses are not always understood. It is indeed learning, but learning out of place.

When once he had engaged himself in disputation, thoughts flowed in on either side: he was now no longer at a loss; he had always objections and solutions at command; *verbaque provisam rem*—give him matter for his verse, and he finds without difficulty verse for his matter.

In Comedy, for which he professes himself not naturally qualified, the mirth which he excites will perhaps not be found so much to arise from any original humour, or  
30 peculiarity of character nicely distinguished and diligently pursued, as from incidents and circumstances, art fees and surprizes; from jests of action rather than of sentiment. What he had of humorous or passionate, he seems to have had not from nature, but from other poets; if not always as a plagiarist, at least as an imitator.

Next to argument, his delight was in wild and daring sallies of sentiment, in the irregular and excentrick violence of wit. He delighted to tread upon the brink of meaning, where light and darkness begin to mingle ; to approach the precipice of absurdity, and hover over the abyss of unideal vacancy. This inclination sometimes produced nonsense, which he knew ; as,

“Move swiftly, sun, and fly a lover’s pace,  
Leave weeks and months behind thee in thy race.

Amariel flies

10

To guard thee from the demons of the air ;  
My flaming sword above them to display,  
All keen, and ground upon the edge of day.”

And sometimes it issued in absurdities, of which perhaps he was not conscious :

“Then we upon our orb’s last verge shall go,  
And see the ocean leaning on the sky ;  
From thence our rolling neighbours we shall know,  
And on the lunar world securely pry.”

These lines have no meaning ; but may we not say, in 20 imitation of Cowley on another book,

“ ’Tis so like *sense* ’twill serve the turn as well ? ”

This endeavour after the grand and the new, produced many sentiments either great or bulky, and many images either just or splendid :

“ I am as free as Nature first made man,  
Ere the base laws of servitude began,  
When wild in woods the noble savage ran. } ”

—’Tis but because the Living death ne’er knew,  
They fear to prove it as a thing that’s new :  
Let me th’ experiment before you try,  
I’ll show you first how easy ’tis to die.

30

—There with a forest of their darts he strove,  
And stood like *Capaneus* defying Jove ;



With his broad sword the boldest beating down,  
While Fate grew pale lest he should win the town,  
And turn'd the iron leaves of his dark book  
To make new dooms, or mend what it mistook.

—I beg no pity for this smouldering clay ;  
For if you give it burial, there it takes  
Possession of your earth ;  
If burnt, and scatter'd in the air, the winds  
That strew my dust diffuse my royalty.  
10 And spread me o'er your clime ; for where one atom  
Of mine shall light, know there Sebastian reigns."

Of these quotations the two first may be allowed to be great, the two latter only tumid.

Of such selection there is no end. I will add only a few more passages ; of which the first, though it may perhaps not be quite clear in prose, is not too obscure for poetry, as the meaning that it has is noble :

20 " No, there is a necessity in Fate,  
Why still the brave bold man is fortunate ;  
He keeps his object ever full in sight,  
And that assurance holds him firm and right ;  
True, 'tis a narrow way that leads to bliss,  
But right before there is no precipice ;  
Fear makes men look aside, and so their footing miss." }

Of the images which the two following citations afford, the first is elegant, the second magnificent ; whether either be just, let the reader judge :

30 " What precious drops are these,  
Which silently each other's track pursue,  
Bright as young diamonds in their infant dew ? "

" —Resign your castle—  
—Enter, brave Sir : for when you speak the word,  
The gates shall open of their own accord ;  
The genius of the place its Lord shall meet,  
And bow its towery forehead at your feet."

These bursts of extravagance, Dryden calls the *Dalilahs*

of the Theatre ; and owns that many noisy lines of Maxamin and Almanzor call out for vengeance upon him ; but *I knew*, says he, *that they were bad enough to please, even when I wrote them.* There is surely reason to suspect that he pleased himself as well as his audience ; and that these, like the harlots of other men, had his love, though not his approbation.

He had sometimes faults of a less generous and splendid kind. He makes, like almost all other poets, very frequent use of mythology, and sometimes connects religion and fable too closely without distinction.

He descends to display his knowledge with pedantick ostentation ; as when, in translating “ Virgil,” he says, *tack to the larboard—and veer starboard* ; and talks, in another work, of *virtue spooming before the wind.* His vanity now and then betrays his ignorance :

“ They Nature’s king through Nature’s opticks view’d ;  
Revers’d they view’d him lessen’d to their eyes.”

He had heard of reversing a telescope, and unluckily reverses the object. 20

He is sometimes unexpectedly mean, When he describes the Supreme Being as moved by prayer to stop the Fire of London, what is his expression ?

“ A hollow crystal pyramid he takes,  
In firmamental waters dipp’d above,  
Of this a broad *extinguisher* he makes,  
And *hoods* the flames that to their quarry strove.”

When he describes the Last Day, and the decisive tribunal, he intermingles this image :

“ When rattling bones together fly,  
From the four quarters of the sky.” 30

It was indeed never in his power to resist the temptation of a jest. In his “ Elogy on Cromwell : ”

“ No sooner was the Frenchman's cause embrac'd,  
Than the *light Monsieur* the *grave Don* outweigh'd ;  
His fortune turn'd the scale—”

He had a vanity, unworthy of his abilities, to shew, as may be suspected, the rank of the company with whom he lived, by the use of French words, which had then crept into conversation ; such as *fraicheur* for *coolness*, *fougue*, for *turbulence*, and a few more, none of which the language has incorporated or retained. They continue only where  
10 they stood first, perpetual warnings to future innovators.

These are his faults of affectation ; his faults of negligence are beyond recital. Such is the unevenness of his compositions, that ten lines are seldom found together without something of which the reader is ashamed. Dryden was no rigid judge of his own pages ; he seldom struggled after supreme excellence, but snatched in haste what was within his reach ; and when he could content others, was himself contented. He did not keep present to his mind, an idea of pure perfection ; nor compare his  
20 works, such as they were, with what they might be made. He knew to whom he should be opposed. He had more musick than Waller, more vigour than Denham, and more nature than Cowley ; and from his contemporaries he was in no danger. Standing therefore in the highest place, he had no care to rise by contending with himself ; but while there was no name above his own, was willing to enjoy fame on the easiest terms.

He was no lover of labour. What he thought sufficient, he did not stop to make better ; and allowed himself to  
30 leave many parts unfinished, in confidence that the good lines would overbalance the bad. What he had once written, he dismissed from his thoughts ; and, I believe, there is no example to be found of any correction or improvement made by him after publication. The hastiness of his productions might be the effect of necessity ; but his

subsequent neglect could hardly have any other cause than impatience of study.

What can be said of his versification, will be little more than a dilatation of the praise given it by Pope.

“ Waller was smooth ; but Dryden taught to join }  
 The varying verse, the full-resounding line,  
 The long majestick march, and energy divine.” }

Some improvements had been already made in English numbers ; but the full force of our language was not yet felt ; the verse that was smooth was commonly feeble. If 10 Cowley had sometimes a finished line, he had it by chance. Dryden knew how to chuse the flowing and the sonorous words ; to vary the pauses, and adjust the accents ; to diversify the cadence, and yet preserve the smoothness of his metre.

Of Triplets and Alexandrines, though he did not introduce the use, he established it. The triplet has long subsisted among us. Dryden seems not to have traced it higher than to Chapman’s “ Homer ; ” but it is to be found in Phaer’s “ Virgil,” written in the reign of Mary, and in 20 Hall’s “ Satires,” published five years before the death of Elizabeth.

The Alexandrine was, I believe, first used by Spenser, for the sake of closing his stanza with a fuller sound. We had a longer measure of fourteen syllables, into which the “ Eneid ” was translated by Phaer, and other works of the ancients by other writers ; of which Chapman’s “ Iliad ” was, I believe, the last.

The two first lines of Phaer’s third “ Eneid ” will exemplify this measure : 30

“ When Asia’s state was overthrown, and Priam’s kingdom stout,  
 All guiltless, by the power of gods above was rooted out.”

As these lines had their break, or *cæsura*, always at the eighth syllable, it was thought, in time, commodious to

divide them ; and quatrains of lines, alternately, consisting of eight and six syllables, make the most soft and pleasing of our lyrick measures ; as,

“ Relentless Time, destroying power,  
Which stone and brass obey,  
Who giv'st to every flying hour  
To work some new decay.”

In the Alexandrine, when its power was once felt, some poems, as Drayton's "Polyolbion," were wholly written ;  
10 and sometimes the measures of twelve and fourteen syllables were interchanged with one another. Cowley was the first that inserted the Alexandrine at pleasure among the heroick lines of ten syllables, and from him Dryden professes to have adopted it.

The Triplet and Alexandrine are not universally approved. Swift always censured them, and wrote some lines to ridicule them. In examining their propriety, it is to be considered that the essence of verse is regularity, and its ornament is variety. To write verse, is to dispose syllables  
20 and sounds harmonically by some known and settled rule ; a rule however lax enough to substitute similitude for identity, to admit change without breach of order, and to relieve the ear without disappointing it. Thus a Latin hexameter is formed from dactyls and spondees differently combined ; the English heroick admits of acute or grave syllables variously disposed. The Latin never deviates into seven feet, or exceeds the number of seventeen syllables ; but the English Alexandrine breaks the lawful bounds, and surprises the reader with two syllables more  
30 than he expected.

The effect of the Triplet is the same : the ear has been accustomed to expect a new rhyme in every couplet ; but is on a sudden surprized with three rhymes together, to which the reader could not accommodate his voice, did he not obtain notice of the change from the braces of the

margins. Surely there is something unskilful in the necessity of such mechanical direction.

Considering the metrical art simply as a science, and consequently excluding all casualty, we must allow that Triplets and Alexandrines, inserted by caprice, are interruptions of that constancy to which science aspires. And though the variety which they produce may very justly be desired, yet to make our poetry exact, there ought to be some stated mode of admitting them.

But till some such regulation can be formed, I wish them 10 still to be retained in their present state. They are sometimes grateful to the reader, and sometimes convenient to the poet. Fenton was of opinion that Dryden was too liberal and Pope too sparing in their use.

The rhymes of Dryden are commonly just, and he valued himself for his readiness in finding them; but he is sometimes open to objection.

It is the common practice of our poets to end the second line with a weak or grave syllable:

“ Together o’er the Alps methinks we fly, 20  
Fill’d with ideas of fair *Italy*.”

Dryden sometimes put the weak rhyme in the first:

“ Laugh all the powers that favour *tyranny*,  
And all the standing army of the sky.”

Sometimes he concludes a period or paragraph with the first line of a couplet, which, though the French seem to do it without irregularity, always displeases in English poetry.

The Alexandrine, though much his favourite, is not always very diligently fabricated by him. It invariably 30 requires a break at the sixth syllable; a rule which the modern French poets never violate, but which Dryden sometimes neglected:

“ And with paternal thunder vindicates his throne.”

Of Dryden's works it was said by Pope, that *he could select from them better specimens of every mode of poetry than any other English writer could supply*. Perhaps no nation ever produced a writer that enriched his language with such variety of models. To him we owe the improvement, perhaps the completion of our metre, the refinement of our language, and much of the correctness of our sentiments. By him we were taught *sapere & fari*, to think naturally and express forcibly. Though Davis has reasoned in  
 10 rhyme before him, it may be perhaps maintained that he was the first who joined argument with poetry. He shewed us the true bounds of a translator's liberty. What was said of Rome, adorned by Augustus, may be applied by an easy metaphor to English poetry embellished by Dryden, *lateritiam invenit, marmoream reliquit*, he found it brick, and he left it marble.

The invocation before the Georgicks is here inserted from Mr. Milbourne's version, that, according to his own proposal, his verses may be compared with those which he  
 20 censures.

“What makes the richest *tilth*, beneath what signs  
 To *plough*, and when to match your *elms* and *vines* :  
 What care with *flocks* and what with *herds* agrees,  
 And all the management of frugal *bees*,  
 I sing, *Mæcenas* ! Ye immensely clear,  
 Vast orbs of light which guide the rolling year :  
*Bacchus*, and mother *Ceres*, if by you  
 We fat'ning *corn* for hungry *mast* pursue,  
 If, taught by you, we first the *cluster* prest,  
 30 And *thin cold streams* with *spritely juice* refresht.  
 Ye *fawns* the present *numens* of the field,  
*Wood nymphs* and *fawns*, your kind assistance yield,  
 Your gifts I sing ! and thou, at whose fear'd stroke  
 From rending earth the fiery *courser* broke,  
 Great *Neptune*, O assist my artful song !  
 And thou to whom the woods and groves belong,

Whose snowy heifers on her flow'ry plains  
 In mighty herds the *Coran Isle* maintains !  
*Pan*, happy shepherd, if thy cares divine,  
 E'er to improve thy *Mænalus* incline ;  
 Leave thy *Lycaean wood* and *native grove*,  
 And with thy lucky smiles our work approve !  
 Be *Pallas* too, sweet oil's inventor, kind ;  
 And he, who first the crooked *plough* design'd !  
*Sylvanus*, god of all the woods appear,  
 Whose hands a new-drawn tender *cypress* bear ! 10  
 Ye *gods* and *goddesses* who e'er with love,  
 Would guard our pastures, and our fields improve !  
 You, who new plants from unsown lands supply ;  
 And with condensing clouds obscure the sky,  
 And drop 'em softly thence in fruitful showers,  
 Assist my enterprize, ye gentler powers !

And thou, great *Cæsar* ! though we know not yet  
 Among what gods thou'lt fix thy lofty seat,  
 Whether thou'lt be the kind *tutelar god*  
 Of thy own *Rome* ; or with thy awful nod, 20  
 Guide the vast world, while thy great hand shall bear  
 The fruits and seasons of the turning year,  
 And thy bright brows thy mother's myrtles wear : }  
 Whether thou'lt all the boundless ocean sway,  
 And sea-men only to thyself shall pray,  
*Thule*, the farthest island, kneel to thee,  
 And, that thou may'st her son by marriage be,  
*Tethys* will for the happy purchase yield  
 To make a *dowry* of her watry field ;  
 Whether thou'lt add to heaven a *brighter sign*, 30  
 And o'er the *summer months* serenely shine ;  
 Where between *Cancer* and *Erigone*,  
 There yet remains a spacious *room* for thee.  
 Where the hot *Scorpion* too his arms declines,  
 And more to thee than half his *arch* resigns ;  
 Whate'er thou'lt be ; for sure the realms below  
 No just pretence to thy command can show ;  
 No such ambition sways thy vast desires,  
 Though *Greece* her own *Elysian fields* admires.  
 And now, at last, contented *Proserpine* 40  
 Can all her mother's earnest prayers decline.



Whate'er thou'lt be, O guide our gentle course,  
 And with thy smiles our bold attempts enforce;  
 With me th' unknowing *rustics'* wants relieve,  
 And, though on earth, our sacred vows receive!"

Mr. Dryden, having received from Rymer his "Remarks on the Tragedies of the last Age," wrote observations on the blank leaves; which, having been in the possession of Mr. Garrick, are by his favour communicated to the publick, that no particle of Dryden may be lost.

- 10 "That we may the less wonder why pity and terror are not now the only springs on which our tragedies move, and that Shakspeare may be more excused, Rapin confesses that the French tragedies now all run on the *tendre*; and gives the reason, because love is the passion which most predominates in our souls, and that therefore the passions represented become insipid, unless they are conformable to the thoughts of the audience. But it is to be concluded that this passion works not now amongst the French so strongly as the other two did amongst the  
 20 ancients. Amongst us, who have a stronger genius for writing, the operations from the writing are much stronger: for the raising of Shakspeare's passions is more from the excellency of the words and thoughts, than the justness of the occasion; and if he has been able to pick single occasions, he has never founded the whole reasonably: yet, by the genius of poetry in writing, he has succeeded.

"Rapin attributes more to the *dictio*, that is, to the words and discourse of a tragedy, than Aristotle has done, who places them in the last rank of beauties; perhaps,  
 30 only last in order, because they are the last product of the design, of the disposition or connection of its parts; of the characters, of the manners of those characters, and of the thoughts proceeding from those manners. Rapin's words are remarkable: 'Tis not the admirable intrigue, the surprising events, and extraordinary incidents, that

make the beauty of a tragedy; 'tis the discourses, when they are natural and passionate: so are Shakspeare's.

“The parts of a poem, tragick or heroick, are,

“1. The fable itself.

“2. The order or manner of its contrivance, in relation of the parts to the whole.

“3. The manners, or decency of the characters, in speaking or acting what is proper for them, and proper to be shewn by the poet.

“4. The thoughts which express the manners. 10

“5. The words which express those thoughts.

“In the last of these, Homer excels Virgil; Virgil all other ancient poets; and Shakspeare all modern poets.

“For the second of these, the order: the meaning is, that a fable ought to have a beginning, middle, and an end, all just and natural: so that that part, *e.g.* which is the middle, could not naturally be the beginning or end, and so of the rest: all depend on one another, like the links of a curious chain. If terror and pity are only to be raised, certainly this author follows Aristotle's rules, and 20 Sophocles' and Euripides's example: but joy may be raised too, and that doubly; either by seeing a wicked man punished, or a good man at last fortunate; or perhaps indignation, to see wickedness prosperous and goodness depressed: both these may be profitable to the end of tragedy, reformation of manners; but the last improperly, only as it begets pity in the audience: though Aristotle, I confess, places tragedies of this kind in the second form.

“He who undertakes to answer this excellent critique of Mr. Rymer, in behalf of our English poets against the 30 Greek, ought to do it in this manner. Either by yielding to him the greatest part of what he contends for, which consists in this, that the *μύθος*, *i.e.* the design and conduct of it, is more conducing in the Greeks to those ends of tragedy, which Aristotle and he propose, namely, to cause

terror and pity; yet the granting this does not set the Greeks above the English poets.

“But the answerer ought to prove two things: first, that the fable is not the greatest master-piece of a tragedy, though it be the foundation of it.

“Secondly, That other ends as suitable to the nature of tragedy may be found in the English, which were not in the Greek.

“Aristotle places the fable first; not *quoad dignitatem*,  
10 *sed quoad fundamentum*: for a fable, never so movingly contrived to those ends of his, pity and terror, will operate nothing on our affections, except the characters, manners, thoughts, and words are suitable.

“So that it remains for Mr. Rymer to prove, that in all those, or the greatest part of them, we are inferior to Sophocles and Euripides: and this he has offered at, in some measure; but, I think, a little partially to the ancients.

“For the fable itself; 'tis in the English more adorned  
20 with episodes, and larger than in the Greek poets; consequently more diverting. For, if the action be but one, and that plain, without any counter-turn of design or episode, *i.e.* under-plot, how can it be so pleasing as the English, which have both under-plot and a turned design, which keeps the audience in expectation of the catastrophe? whereas in the Greek poets we see through the whole design at first.

“For the characters, they are neither so many nor so various in Sophocles and Euripides, as in Shakspeare and  
30 Fletcher; only they are more adopted to those ends of tragedy which Aristotle commends to us, pity and terror.

“The manners flow from the characters, and consequently must partake of their advantages and disadvantages.

“The thoughts and words, which are the fourth and fifth beauties of tragedy, are certainly more noble and more

poetical in the English than in the Greek, which must be proved by comparing them, somewhat more equitably than Mr. Rymer has done.

“After all, we need not yield that the English way is less conducing to move pity and terror, because they often shew virtue oppressed and vice punished: where they do not both, or either, they are not to be defended.

“And if we should grant that the Greeks performed this better, perhaps it may admit of dispute, whether pity and terror are either the prime, or at least the only ends of 10 tragedy.

“’Tis not enough that Aristotle has said so; for Aristotle drew his models of tragedy from Sophocles and Euripides; and if he had seen ours, might have changed his mind. And chiefly we have to say (what I hinted on pity and terror, in the last paragraph save one), that the punishment of vice and reward are the most adequate ends of tragedy, because most conducing to good example of life. Now pity is not so easily raised for a criminal, and the ancient tragedy always represents its chief person such, as it is for 20 an innocent man; and the suffering of innocence and punishment of the offender is of the nature of English tragedy: contrarily, in the Greek, innocence is unhappy often, and the offender escapes. Then we are not touched with the sufferings of any sort of men so much as of lovers; and this was almost unknown to the ancients: so that they neither administered poetical justice, of which Mr. Rymer boasts, so well as we; neither knew they the best common-place of pity, which is love.

“He therefore unjustly blames us for not building on 30 what the ancients left us: for it seems, upon consideration of the premises, that we have wholly finished what they began.

“My judgement on this piece is this, that it is extremely learned; but that the author of it is better read in the

Greek than in the English poets: that all writers ought to study this critique, as the best account I have ever seen of the ancients: that the model of tragedy he has here given, is excellent, and extreme correct; but that it is not the only model of all tragedy, because it is too much circumscribed in plot, characters, &c.; and lastly, that we may be taught here justly to admire and imitate the ancients, without giving them the preference with this author, in prejudice to our own country.

10 “Want of method in this excellent treatise, makes the thoughts of the author sometimes obscure.

“His meaning, that pity and terror are to be moved, is, that they are to be moved as the means conducing to the ends of tragedy, which are pleasure and instruction.

“And these two ends may be thus distinguished. The chief end of the poet is to please; for his immediate reputation depends on it.

“The great end of the poem is to instruct, which is performed by making pleasure the vehicle of that instruction; for poesy is an art, and all arts are made to profit.  
20 *Rapin.*

“The pity, which the poet is to labour for, is for the criminal, not for those or him whom he has murdered, or who have been the occasion of the tragedy. The terror is likewise in the punishment of the same criminal; who, if he be represented too great an offender, will not be pitied: if altogether innocent, his punishment will be unjust.

“Another obscurity is, where he says Sophocles perfected  
30 tragedy by introducing the third actor; that is, he meant, three kinds of action; one company singing, or another playing on the musick; a third dancing.

“To make a true judgement in this competition betwixt the Greek poets and the English, in tragedy:

“Consider, first, how Aristotle has defined a tragedy.

Secondly, what he assigns the end of it to be. Thirdly, what he thinks the beauties of it. Fourthly, the means to attain the end proposed.

“Compare the Greek and English tragick poets justly, and without partiality, according to those rules.

“Then secondly, consider whether Aristotle has made a just definition of tragedy; of its parts, of its ends, and of its beauties; and whether he, having not seen any others but those of Sophocles, Euripides, &c., had or truly could determine what all the excellences of tragedy are, and <sup>10</sup> wherein they consist.

“Next shew in what ancient tragedy was deficient: for example, in the narrowness of its plots, and fewness of persons, and try whether that be not a fault in the Greek poets; and whether their excellency was so great, when the variety was visibly so little; or whether what they did was not very easy to do.

“Then make a judgement on what the English have added to their beauties: as, for example, not only more plot, but also new passions; as, namely, that of love, scarce <sup>20</sup> touched on by the ancients, except in this one example of Phædra, cited by Mr. Rymer; and in that how short they were of Fletcher!

“Prove also that love, being an heroick passion, is fit for tragedy, which cannot be denied, because of the example alleged of Phædra; and how far Shakspeare has outdone them in friendship, &c.

“To return to the beginning of this enquiry; consider if pity and terror be enough for tragedy to move: and I believe, upon a true definition of tragedy, it will be found <sup>30</sup> that its work extends farther, and that it is to reform manners, by a delightful representation of human life in great persons, by way of dialogue. If this be true, then not only pity and terror are to be moved, as the only means to bring us to virtue, but generally love to virtue and hatred

to vice ; by shewing the rewards of one, and punishments of the other ; at least, by rendering virtue always amiable, tho' it be shewn unfortunate ; and vice detestable, though it be shewn triumphant.

“ If, then, the encouragement of virtue and discouragement of vice be the proper ends of poetry in tragedy, pity and terror, though good means, are not the only. For all the passions, in their turns, are to be set in a ferment : as joy, anger, love, fear, are to be used as the poet's common-  
10 places ; and a general concernment for the principal actors is to be raised, by making them appear such in their characters, their words, and actions, as will interest the audience in their fortunes.

“ And if, after all, in a larger sense, pity comprehends this concernment for the good, and terror includes detestation for the bad, then let us consider whether the English have not answered this end of tragedy, as well as the ancients, or perhaps better.

“ And here Mr. Rymer's objections against these plays  
20 are to be impartially weighed, that we may see whether they are of weight enough to turn the balance against our countrymen.

“ 'Tis evident those plays, which he arraigns, have moved both those passions in a high degree upon the stage.

“ To give the glory of this away from the poet, and to place it upon the actors, seems unjust.

“ One reason is, because whatever actors they have found, the event has been the same ; that is, the same  
30 passions have been always moved : which shews, that there is something of force and merit in the plays themselves, conducing to the design of raising these two passions : and suppose them ever to have been excellently acted, yet action only adds grace, vigour, and more life, upon the stage ; but cannot give it wholly where it is not first.

But secondly, I dare appeal to those who have never seen them acted, if they have not found these two passions moved within them: and if the general voice will carry it, Mr. Rymer's prejudice will take off his single testimony.

"This, being matter of fact, is reasonably to be established by this appeal; as if one man says 'tis night, the rest of the world conclude it to be day; there needs no farther argument against him, that it is so.

"If he urge, that the general taste is depraved, his arguments to prove this can at best but evince that our poets 10 took not the best way to raise those passions; but experience proves against him, that these means, which they have used, have been successful, and have produced them.

"And one reason of that success is, in my opinion, this, that Shakspeare and Fletcher have written to the genius of the age and nation in which they lived; for though nature, as he objects, is the same in all places, and reason too the same; yet the climate, the age, the disposition of the people, to whom a poet writes, may be so different, that what pleased the Greeks would not satisfy an English 20 audience.

"And if they proceeded upon a foundation of truer reason to please the Athenians than Shakspeare and Fletcher to please the English, it only shews that the Athenians were a more judicious people; but the poet's business is certainly to please the audience.

"Whether our English audience have been pleased hitherto with acorns, as he calls it, or with bread, is the next question; that is, whether the means which Shakspeare and Fletcher have used in their plays to raise those 30 passions before named, be better applied to the ends by the Greek poets than by them. And perhaps we shall not grant him this wholly: let it be granted that a writer is not to run down with the stream, or to please the people by their own usual methods, but rather to reform their



judgements, it still remains to prove that our theatre needs this total reformation.

"The faults, which he has found in their designs, are rather wittily aggravated in many places than reasonably urged; and as much may be returned on the Greeks, by one who were as witty as himself.

"2. They destroy not, if they are granted, the foundation of the fabrick; only take away from the beauty of the symmetry: for example, the faults in the character of the  
10 King and No-king are not as he makes them, such as render him detestable, but only imperfections which accompany human nature, and are for the most part excused by the violence of his love; so that they destroy not our pity or concernment for him: this answer may be applied to most of his objections of that kind.

"And Rollo committing many murders, when he is answerable but for one, is too severely arraigned by him: for it adds to our horror and detestation of the criminal: and poetick justice is not neglected neither; for we stab  
20 him in our minds for every offence which he commits; and the point, which the poet is to gain on the audience, is not so much in the death of an offender as the raising an horror of his crimes.

"That the criminal should neither be wholly guilty, nor wholly innocent, but so participating of both as to move both pity and terror, is certainly a good rule, but not perpetually to be observed; for that were to make all tragedies too much alike, which objection he foresaw, but has not fully answered.

30 "To conclude, therefore; if the plays of the ancients are more correctly plotted, ours are more beautifully written. And if we can raise passions as high on worse foundations, it shews our genius in tragedy is greater; for, in all other parts of it, the English have manifestly excelled them."

The original of the following letter is preserved in the Library at Lambeth, and was kindly imparted to the publick by the reverend Dr. Vyse.

Copy of an original Letter from John Dryden, Esq ; to his sons in Italy, from a MS in the Lambeth Library, marked N° 933. p. 56.

(*Superscribed*)

Al Illustrissimo Sig<sup>re</sup>,  
Carlo Dryden Camariere  
d'Honore A. S. S.

10

In Roma.

Franca per Mantoua.

“ Sept. the 3d, our style.

“ Dear Sons,

“ Being now at Sir William Bowyer's in the country, I cannot write at large, because I find myself somewhat indisposed with a cold, and am thick of hearing, rather worse than I was in town. I am glad to find, by your letter of July 26th, your style, that you are both in health; 20 but wonder you should think me so negligent as to forget to give you an account of the ship in which your parcel is to come. I have written to you two or three letters concerning it, which I have sent by safe hands, as I told you, and doubt not but you have them before this can arrive to you. Being out of town, I have forgotten the ship's name, which your mother will enquire, and put it into her letter, which is joined with mine. But the master's name I remember: he is called Mr. Ralph Thorp; the ship is bound to Leghorn, consigned to Mr. Peter and Mr. Tho. 30 Ball, merchants. I am of your opinion, that by Tonson's means almost all our letters have miscarried for this last year. But, however, he has missed of his design in the

Dedication, though he had prepared the book for it; for in every figure of 'Eneas' he has caused him to be drawn like King William, with a hooked nose. After my return to town, I intend to alter a play of Sir Robert Howard's, written long since, and lately put by him into my hands: 'tis called 'The Conquest of China by the Tartars.' It will cost me six weeks study, with the probable benefit of an hundred pounds. In the mean time I am writing a song for St. Cecilia's Feast, who, you know, is the patroness of musick. This is troublesome, and no way beneficial; but I could not deny the Stewards of the Feast, who came in a body to me to desire that kindness, one of them being Mr. Bridgman, whose parents are your mother's friends. I hope to send you thirty guineas between Michaelmas and Christmas, of which I will give you an account when I come to town. I remember the counsel you give me in your letter; but dissembling, though lawful in some cases, is not my talent; yet, for your sake, I will struggle with the plain openness of my nature, and keep  
20 in my just resentments against that degenerate order. In the mean time, I flatter not myself with any manner of hopes, but do my duty, and suffer for God's sake; being assured, beforehand, never to be rewarded, though the times should alter. Towards the latter end of this month, September, Charles will begin to recover his perfect health, according to his nativity, which, casting it myself, I am sure is true, and all things hitherto have happened accordingly to the very time that I predicted them: I hope at the same time to recover more health, according to my  
30 age. Remember me to poor Harry, whose prayers I earnestly desire. My 'Virgil' succeeds in the world beyond its desert or my expectation. You know the profits might have been more; but neither my conscience nor my honour would suffer me to take them: but I never can repent of my constancy, since I am thoroughly persuaded of the jus-

tice of the cause for which I suffer. It has pleased God to raise up many friends to me amongst my enemies, though they who ought to have been my friends are negligent of me. I am called to dinner, and cannot go on with this letter, which I desire you to excuse; and am

“Your most affectionate father,

“JOHN DRYDEN.”



## NOTES.

p. 1, l. 3, **display**, *sc.* of facts.

l. 8, **August 9, 1631.** Some slight uncertainty exists as to the date. The monument erected in Westminster Abbey gives 1632 as the year. The poet's father was married in October, 1630, to Mary Pickering, daughter of the rector of Aldwinkle. Tradition relates that the poet was born at the rectory of Aldwinkle All Saints. He was the eldest of fourteen children.

l. 8, **Aldwinkle.** Now called Aldwinkle All Saints. It lies nearer Thrapston than Oundle. Dryden's father was vicar of the parish. At the vicarage of the next parish, Aldwinkle St. Peters, Thomas Fuller, the author of the "Worthies of England," was born.

l. 9, **Erasmus Dryden**, died 1654. He was a poor country gentleman. Like the rest of the family, he was probably a strong supporter of the Puritan and Parliamentary party. His wife's relation, Sir Gilbert Pickering, was one of Cromwell's peers.

l. 9, **Tichmersh.** Now called Tichmarsh, or Titchmarsh. It is about two miles from Thrapston, on the borders of Huntingdonshire. Although Erasmus Dryden lived here the family property lay at Canons Ashby, near Blakesley and Towcester.

l. 13, **Huntingdon.** "Originally in Cumberland. The first migration of a Dryden into Northamptonshire occurred early in the reign of Elizabeth; and the first connection of Dryden with the county of Huntingdon in or about 1632" (Cunningham).

l. 25, **Derrick.** Samuel Derrick (1724-1769), an Irishman, who, after failing as an actor and an author, eventually succeeded Beau Nash as Master of the Ceremonies at Bath (1761). Johnson told Boswell, "I sent Derrick to Dryden's relations to gather materials for his life; and I believe he got all that I myself should have got." See Boswell's "Life of Johnson," Boswell, i. 81, 361, 362, where several anecdotes are told of this ne'er-do-well, who had secured the affection both of Johnson and his biographer.

l. 15, **two hundred a year.** Considerably less, according to recent biographers. The whole property at Canons Ashby (or Blakesley) only comprised about 200 acres, and this brought in about £60 a year. Of this the poet only had two-thirds, until his mother's death in 1676.

l. 16, **an Anabaptist.** The Anabaptists are now called Baptists. This sect, which first originated in England in the year 1633, as an offshoot of the Independents, has only a slight connection with the German Anabaptists, whose hideous excesses at Münster horrified Catholics and Protestants alike, and with the earlier English Anabaptists who were the disciples of those fanatics. They repudiated the name "Anabaptist" as misleading, and had little in common with the earlier Anabaptists, save the rejection of infant baptism. During the Civil War they took part strongly with the Parliament; but were persecuted by the Presbyterians after the fall of the Anglican Church, until Cromwell's time.

p. 2, l. 2, **king's scholars.** These are the scholars on the foundation of Westminster School, that is, whose education is paid for out of the school estates. They were forty in number, and were, until about 1860, elected by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster. They wear cap and gown.

Even Malone's tireless industry failed to discover the date of Dryden's admission to the school. See Malone's edition of "Dryden's Prose Works," i. 13.

l. 2, **Dr. Busby.** Richard Busby, D.D. (1606-1695), one of the most famous of schoolmasters, renowned for his learning and his devotion to the birch. He had among his pupils Dryden, Locke, South, and Atterbury. There is a monument to him in the Abbey.

Dryden dedicated his translation of the Fifth Satire of Persius to Dr. Busby, "to whom I am obliged for the best part of my own education and that of my two sons."

l. 4, **Westminster scholarships.** The king's scholars of Westminster had the right of succession to certain scholarships at Trinity College, Cambridge, and Christ Church, Oxford.

Dryden matriculated at Trinity College, Cambridge, July, 1650. He took his B.A. degree in January, 1654, and his M.A. in 1668.

l. 6, **on the death of Lord Hastings.** Henry, Lord Hastings, son of the Earl of Huntingdon, was a Westminster scholar of promise, who died of small-pox in 1649, aged nineteen. A volume entitled "*Lachrymæ Musarum*, the Tears of the Muses expressed in Elegies written by divers persons of Nobility, and Worth upon the death of the most hopeful Henry, Lord Hastings, etc.," was published at the close of 1649; it contained poems by

Herrick, Denham, and Marvel. See Globe edition of "Dryden," p. 333.

l. 7, **conceits**. A conceit is properly a thought or idea. In the Elizabethan period it was adopted as the equivalent of the Italian "conpetto," a brilliant idea, a flash of wit, such as a far-fetched simile. Compare Johnson's "Life of Cowley" ("Lives," Bohn, i. 22, *seq.*) for an account of the "conceited" school of sixteenth-century poetry.

l. 10, **first rosebuds**. Cf. lines 57-66.

"Blisters with pride swelled, through which his flesh did sprout,  
Like rosebuds, stuck in the lily-skin about.  
Each little pimple had a tear in it  
To wail the fault its rising did commit;  
Which, rebel-like, with its own lord at strife  
Thus made an insurrection 'gainst his life.  
Or were these gems sent to adorn his skin,  
The cabinet of a richer soul within?  
No comet need foretell his change drew on  
Whose corps might seem a constellation."

l. 19, **no fellowship**. "He is said, however, to have continued to reside at Cambridge till about the middle of 1657" (Christie, Globe, p. xix).

During his college career he was under punishment for disobedience to the Vice-Master, and for contumacy in taking the punishment inflicted by that authority (July, 1652).

l. 22, **Life of Plutarch**. This was published in 1683 as "an Introduction to a translation of Plutarch by various hands" (Scott's "Dryden," xvii. 1, *seq.*). In the preface Dryden says, "I read Plutarch in the library of Trinity College in Cambridge, to which foundation I gratefully acknowledge a great part of my education." He had used a similar phrase in speaking of Westminster. See p. 124, above.

l. 23, **prologue at Oxford**. Dryden wrote many prologues and epilogues to the University of Oxford, spoken on the occasion of the production of plays not necessarily by himself. The lines quoted by Johnson appeared in such a prologue, the date and occasion of which are not known. It was first printed in "Miscellany Poems" of 1684. See Globe, "Dryden," pp. 451, 452. Mr. Christie remarks that "no inference can be drawn as to altered feeling" from this, since Dryden was given to insincere flattery on such occasions; and he quotes from a letter of Dryden to Lord Rochester in which he remarks, "your lordship will judge how easy 'tis to pass anything upon an University, and what gross flattery the learned will endure" (Globe, p. xxi).



l. 30, "**Heroic Stanzas.**" Globe, p. 5. The verses, written when Dryden was twenty-seven, appeared in a volume called "Three Poems upon the Death of his late Highness, Oliver, Lord Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland, written by Mr. Edm. Waller, Mr. Jo. Dryden, Mr. Sprat of Oxford" (1659).

l. 32, **Sprat and Waller.** Thomas Sprat (1636-1713), afterwards Bishop of Rochester, author of a "History of the Royal Society" and editor of Cowley's "Works." See Johnson's "Lives," Bohn, ii. 41, *seq.* Edmund Waller (1605-1687), the famous poet. See Johnson's "Lives," Bohn, i. 253, *seq.*

p. 3, l. 3, "**Astrea Redux.**" Globe, p. 15.

l. 11, **The same year.** Really in 1661. "To his Sacred Majesty, A Panegyric on his Coronation" (Globe, p. 24).

l. 12, **was the line.** Note the awkwardness of this, since Johnson quotes a couple. They are vv. 7, 8 of the "*Astræa*." Several editors quote the lines from a satire called "News from Hell:"

"Laureate, who was both learned and florid,  
Was damned long since for 'silence horrid,'  
Nor had there been such clutter made  
But that this silence did invade;  
Invade! and so it might well, that's clear.  
But what did it invade?—an ear."

l. 27, **offered to a patron, dedicated.**

l. 32, **is not certainly known.** Dryden's first play was the "Wild Gallant," acted February 5th, 1663 (new style), and published in 1669.

According to Malone, Dr. Johnson was led into his many errors with regard to the dates and succession of Dryden's plays by Langbaine's "Account of the English Dramatic Poets," wherein the plays are arranged in alphabetical and not chronological order, while the dates of publication are often incorrect.

p. 4, l. 15, **the "Wild Gallant."** Evelyn saw it on the night of its first production, February 5th, 1663. Pepys, on February 23rd, saw it "performed by the King's house, but it was ill acted, and the play so poor a thing as I never saw in my life almost, and so little answering to the name, that from beginning to end, I could not, nor can at this time, tell certainly which was the Wild Gallant. The King did not seem pleased at all, all the whole play, nor any body else, though Mr. Clerke whom we met here did commend it to us. My Lady Castlemaine was all worth seeing to-night and little Steward" (Mrs. Stewart). Lady Castlemaine seems to have taken the play under her protection; for which Dryden showed his gratitude in the verses to

her "upon her encouraging his first play." See *Globe*, p. 305; Scott's "Dryden," ii. 13, *seq.*

l. 18, and change it. It was produced in its new form in March, 1667.

l. 29, the "**Rival Ladies**." This tragi-comedy was first acted in the winter of 1663-4, and published in 1664. Like most of Dryden's plays it was produced at the King's House, the theatre built by Thomas Killigrew in Drury Lane (1663). This playhouse took the place of a theatre known as the Phoenix, or Cockpit, and is, so to speak, the ancestor of the present Drury Lane Theatre.

Pepys saw it in August, 1664, at the King's House, and found it "a very innocent and most pretty witty play" (Scott's "Dryden," ii. 109).

l. 30, **Earl of Orrery**. This was Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery (1621-1679), the author of the romance called "*Parthenissa*" (1654), and the tragedies "*Mustapha*" (1665) and "*The Black Prince*" (1667).

l. 32, his essay of **dramatick rhyme**, his first attempt at writing a play in rhyme. Only the tragic part of the "*Rival Ladies*" was in rhyme, however.

l. 35, **Sir Robert Howard** (1626-1698). He was the youngest son of the Earl of Berkshire, and thus was Dryden's brother-in-law.

The poet had married the Lady Elizabeth Howard, the daughter of the Earl of Berkshire, a woman of violent temper and sullied reputation. She seems to have brought Dryden some amount of property. See p. 46.

l. 35, "**Indian Queen**" (Scott's "Dryden," ii. 201, *seq.*). Produced in the winter of 1663-4. It was first seen by Pepys at the King's Theatre on February 1st, 1664, but a few days before he had noticed the street "full of coaches at the new play, 'The Indian Queen,' which for show they say exceeds 'Henry VIII.'" He found it "a most pleasant show, and beyond my expectation; the play good, but spoiled with the rhyme, which breaks the sense." Evelyn saw it within a week, and speaks of the magnificence of the stage-setting.

p. 5, l. 3, "**Indian Emperor**" (Scott's "Dryden," ii. 257, *seq.*). Apparently produced in the winter of 1664-5; entered for publication at Stationers' Hall in May, 1665. It was first printed in 1667, as Johnson says.

l. 7, "**The Rehearsal**." This famous burlesque was written by George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham (1627-1688), with some help from Butler, Sprat, and others. It satirizes Dryden under the name of John Bayes.

The passage to which Johnson refers is as follows: "Besides,

sir, I have printed above a hundred sheets of paper to insinuate the plot into the boxes" ("Rehearsal," act i. sc. 1).

1. 10, **description of Night.**

"All things are hush'd, as Nature's self lay dead,  
The mountains seem to nod their drowsy head.  
The little birds in dreams their songs repeat,  
And sleeping flowers beneath the night dew sweat :  
Even Lust and Envy sleep ; yet Love denies  
Rest to my soul and slumber to my eyes."

1. 10, **Rymer.** Thomas Rymer (1639-1713), the critic and annalist. His "Tragedies of the Last Age Considered" (1678), and his "Fœdera," a collection of historical documents (1704-1713, continued by other hands) are his principal works.

The description which Rymer admired so much Wordsworth considered "vague, bombastic, and senseless" (Essay Supplementary to the Preface, Macmillan's edition of Wordsworth, p. 870).

1. 28, "**Anus Mirabilis.**" Globe, p. 35, *seq.* The quotation that follows is loose, and omits several sentences which come between the two actually given. Cf. Globe, bottom of p. 39.

p. 6, l. 9, "**Gondibert**" of Davenant. Sir William Davenant (1606-1668) was, it is said, the godson of Shakespeare. In 1638 he became poet laureate in succession to Ben Jonson. He was knighted by King Charles for his courage at the siege of Gloucester in 1643. He was twice imprisoned. His "Gondibert" was written when in exile on the Continent, and published in 1651. It is an epic poem relating the contest between Gondibert and Oswald for the hand of Rhodalinda, daughter of Aribert of Verona. During the dreary period of Puritan ascendancy he attempted to restore the theatre, and his "Siege of Rhodes," an opera, was produced in 1656.

1. 12, **he mentions the encumbrances.** Globe, pp. 38, 39.

1. 31, **a strange inconsistency.** Johnson's difficulty is easily solved. The dates of the prefaces, etc., which he mentions are as follows :—Dryden's dedication of his "Rival Ladies" to the Earl of Orrery, 1664; Howard's preface to his "Four New Plays" (which contained the "Indian Queen"), 1665; Dryden's "Essay of Dramatic Poesy," published 1667; Howard's "Address to the Reader," prefixed to the "Duke of Lerma," published in 1668. Dryden's controversial preface to the "Indian Emperor" was not given in the first edition, 1667, but was added in the second edition, 1668. It was omitted in some later editions.

1. 32, **Langbaine.** Gerard Langbaine (1656-1692), a critic and historian of the stage. His "Momus Triumphans" was

published in 1688, and his "Account of the English Dramatic Poets," consulted by Johnson, in 1691.

"The help which Johnson says he receives from Langbaine [on this question of dates], he might have derived from the opening paragraph of the Preface to the 'Indian Emperor'" (Cunningham).

p. 7, l. 5, as **poet-laureat**. Davenant died in April, 1668, but Dryden did not get the place until August, 1670. He received the emoluments, however, from the date of his predecessor's death. By the same patent Dryden was appointed Historiographer Royal, in succession to James Howell, the writer of the "Epistolæ Hoelianaë," who had died in 1666. The two offices jointly were worth £200 a year, together with the tierce of canary from the king's cellars; and arrears were paid in the case of the laureateship. The salary of the poet-laureate is now reduced to £72 a year. It is not without interest to compare this sum with the £1,500 a year paid to the Master of the Buckhounds, and the £700 a year paid to the Lords-in-waiting.

l. 8, **tierce**, a cask containing forty-two gallons, that is one-third of a pipe, which contains 126 gallons.

l. 10, **The same year**. This is a mistake. The "Essay in Dramatic Poetry" was published in 1667.

l. 12, **by Prior**. See his dedication of his "Poems" to Lionel, Earl of Dorset, son of Charles, Earl of Dorset.

l. 12, **the principal character**. This is Eugenius, who represents Charles Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, afterwards Earl of Dorset (1637-1706). Johnson had written a short account of him in the "Lives of the Poets" (Bohn, i. 313-316), so his slip of Duke for Earl of Dorset is a little strange.

The other three interlocutors in Dryden's "Essay" are Crites (Sir Robert Howard), Lisideius (Sir Charles Sedley), and Neander (Dryden himself). The last two names are partial anagrams.

l. 14, **Dialogues upon Medals**. (Addison's "Works," Bohn, i. 255, *seq.*)

l. 16, "**Secret Love, or the Maiden Queen**" (Scott's "Dryden," ii. 379, *seq.*). Produced in the end of February, or beginning of March, 1666-7, at the King's Theatre. Pepys saw it on March 2nd, and says it was "mightily commended for regularity of it, and the strain and wit; and the truth is there is a comical part done by Nell [*sc.* Gwyn] which is Florimel, that I never can hope ever to see the like done again by man or woman." The play seems to have been a favourite with King Charles.

l. 26, "**Sir Martin Marall**" (Scott's "Dryden," iii. 1, *seq.*).

This adaptation of Molière's "L'Etourdi" was attributed at the time to the Duke of Newcastle, "but as everybody says corrected by Dryden" (Pepys). It was produced on August 15th, 1667. Next day Pepys saw it and says, "I never laughed so in all my life, and at very good wit therein, not fooling. The house full."

It was published in 1668 without the author's name, but later Dryden adopted it without any protest. Probably Malone's view is correct, that Dryden revised and adapted the Duke of Newcastle's version of the French play.

l. 30, **Voiture**. Vincent Voiture (1598-1648), a French poet and letter-writer, enjoyed an enormous contemporary reputation, which has now grown very dim.

Langbaine had made the charge of plagiarism in this matter long before Johnson ("Account of English Dramatic Poets," 1691, p. 132).

l. 32, "**The Tempest**" (Scott's "Dryden," iii. 95, *seq.*). This adaptation of Shakespeare's play retains much of the original. Acted at the Duke's Theatre, of which Davenant was manager, on November 7th, 1667. Pepys saw it on that day, and found "the house mighty full. The king and court there." He says "the play has no great wit, but yet good above ordinary plays." It was published in 1670, after Davenant's death (1668).

l. 34, **says he**. Preface to "The Tempest" (Scott's "Dryden," iii. 101).

p. 8, l. 9, **sister-monster Sycorax**. Sycorax, the witch, who does not appear, but is only alluded to as in Shakespeare's play, leaves two children, Caliban and Sycorax, who take part in the action.

l. 11, **had never seen a woman**. Hippolito, right heir to the Dukedom of Mantua, which Alonzo—who is not King of Naples but Duke of Savoy—has usurped, has never seen a woman. He has been kept by Prospero in the island, having been bequeathed secretly by his father to Prospero's charge, and having shared Prospero's exile. He falls in love with Dorinda, a second daughter of Prospero, who like her sister Miranda, had never seen a man.

"By calculation of his birth, I saw  
Death threatening him, if till some time were past,  
He should behold the face of any woman" (Act ii. sc. 2.).

l. 12, **About this time, in 1673**. Johnson is careless in his arrangement of events. "The Tempest" was produced in 1667. In Cunningham's edition of the "Lives of the Poets," the chronological order is preserved by inserting in this place Johnson's account of the "Mock Astrologer" and "Tyrannic Love," etc., given in pp. 13, 14 above.

1. 14, **Elkanah Settle** (1648-1724), a Bedfordshire man, educated at Trinity College, Oxford, was at this time a rising dramatic writer. His first play, "Cambyzes" (1671), was praised by Rochester and others, who hoped to set him up as a rival to Dryden. "The Empress of Morocco" had achieved a distinct success at the Duke's Theatre in 1673, and was printed in the same year. "Beside the offences mentioned by Johnson, the price was two shillings, being double the ordinary charge, and the title announced 'Elkanah Settle, Servant to His Majesty,' an addition more properly belonging to Dryden" (Mrs. Napier's note).

For Dryden's brilliant characterisation of Settle under the name of Doeg, see "Absalom and Achitophel" (Part II. 412, *seq.*, Globe, p. 164).

Settle became the City poet, but his latter days were unfortunate. He degenerated into a wretched hackwriter. In the "Idler" (No. 12) Johnson tells us that Settle was at first a Whig, and wrote tracts on the Popish Plot, but on the accession of James II. he not only celebrated the coronation with an ode, but actually entered as a trooper in the army on Hounslow Heath. He wrote plays for a booth in Bartholomew Fair, and is said to have appeared on this humble stage as a dragon. Compare Young's lines:

"Poor Elkanah, all other changes past,  
For bread in Smithfield dragons hiss'd at last,  
Spit streams of fire to make the butchers gape,  
And found his manners suited to his shape."

Another anecdote of him is told by Johnson in the "Idler" (No. 12), and is repeated on p. 34, above. He at last obtained admission to the Charterhouse, where he died in 1724.

1. 18, **sculptures**, engravings. The copper-plates represent the principal scenes. Cf. p. 12.

1. 19, **preface of defiance**. There is no preface. The oblique sneers at Dryden occur in the dedication to Henry, Earl of Norwich, afterwards eleventh Duke of Norfolk. Dryden must have been somewhat thin-skinned to have taken offence at jokes which were not directed unambiguously at himself, but against "fawning scribblers," and the tribe of dramatic poets.

1. 21, **acted at Whitehall**. This was in the same year 1673. It was acted says the gratified Settle in his dedication, "by persons of such birth and honour that they borrowed no greatness from the characters they acted."

The Earl of Mulgrave and the Earl of Rochester each contributed a prologue.

l. 23, **wrote upon the play**. This pamphlet, entitled "Notes and Observations on the 'Empress of Morocco,'" was chiefly written by John Crowne (who died 1703), the dramatist, author of the "City Politics" (acted about 1683), and "Sir Courtly Nice" (1685). He received assistance, however, from Dryden and from Shadwell, and Dryden must be considered responsible for the attack on a rival. There is no copy in the British Museum.

l. 27, **conversation**, behaviour. Mr. Milnes refers to l. Peter ii. 12, and other places in the A. V.

l. 31, **lewd**, ignorant, licentious. Mid. Eng., lewed; A.S., læwed, ignorant.

l. 31, **numbers**, metre.

l. 33, **pudder**, or pother, means bustle, confusion; connected with the verb, "to potter," a frequentative form of "put." All words of Keltic origin. It is now supposed not to be connected with "bother," another Keltic word having much the same meaning.

l. 35, **elocution**, power of utterance or expression.

p. 9, l. 7, **his King, his two Emperresses**. Among Settle's *dramatis personæ* are Muly Labas, Emperor or King of Morocco, his mother, Laula, the Empress or Queen-Mother, and Morena, the young Queen.

l. 12, a **particular remark**, a remark on an individual point, or single passage.

What follows exemplifies the minute and captious character of most of the criticism of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

l. 15, "**To flattering lightning**." "Empress of Morocco," the best lines of Act i.

l. 29, **stone-horse**, stallion.

l. 34, **smack**, a small, one-masted boat.

p. 10, l. 5, "**Whene'er she bleeds**." "Empress of Morocco," Act i. sc. 1 (edit. 1673, p. 3).

l. 20, **grout**, A.S., grūt, coarse meal, "the great or large oat-meal" (Bailey's "Dictionary"). It seems here to mean porridge made of such meal.

l. 24, "**For when we're dead**." "Empress of Morocco," Act i. sc. 1 (edit. 1673, pp. 3, 4).

p. 11, l. 7, **Westminster white-broth**. I can find no other passage in which this expression is used.

l. 9, **stodged**. "Stodge" is still used as a substantive, and we have the adjective, "stodgy." It seems to be connected with "stog" to get stuck in the mud; and perhaps with the word "stuck" itself. It is not included in any dictionary which I have examined.

1. 12, **physical**, remedying ill health.

"Is Brutus sick, and is it physical  
To walk unbraced and suck up the humours  
Of the dank morning."

"Julius Cæsar," ii. 1, 261, *seq.*

1. 13, **Morena**. The heroine of Settle's play.1. 16, **doctor's bill**, prescription.

"Like him that took the doctor's bill  
And swallowed it instead o' th' pill."

Butler, "Hudibras," I. i. 604 (Milnes).

1. 17, **receipt**, a recipe or doctor's prescription.

p. 12, l. 3, **Madge with a candle**. I can find no parallel for this picturesque phrase, which is of course equivalent to Jack-o'-lantern.

1. 9, a **reading**. The *a* is the preposition on; as in "a-bed." Cf. "I go a-fishing," "A-hunting we will go."

1. 15, **forms**, the beds of hares.

1. 17, **flush**, to put up birds suddenly, when shooting.

1. 18, **unkennel**. Another sporting term. When a fox is driven out of its "earth," or hole, it is said to be "unkennelled."

1. 25, **booth-keeper**, showman.

1. 28, **this correction**, *sc.* Crowne's pamphlet.

1. 30, **trans-non-sense sense**. This must mean, change sense into nonsense. But it would perhaps give a better meaning if we could read "trans-sense nonsense," that is, change his non-sense into (comparative) sense.

p. 13, l. 1, **greasy twigs**. The osier twigs of which the baskets are made are likened to the twigs covered with bird-lime, by which small birds are caught.

1. 4, **fustian**, a coarse kind of cloth. Hence worthless, affected, and extravagant writing.

The name comes through French and Italian from the Arabic, "fustât," a name meaning a tent. The original name of Cairo, which was called "El-Fustât," or the Tent, because it was erected in 641 on the spot where the Mohammedan conqueror of Egypt, Amr, encamped. The canvas cloth called "fustian" was first made there, according to Bochart, a famous French traveller and writer on the Holy Land, who died in 1667.

1. 6, **bombast**, cotton, manufactured or unmanufactured, used for padding. Hence extravagant and swelling language. Cf. "fustian," above.

The word comes from Greek, through Latin and Italian. Gr.,



βόμβυξ, at first the silkworm, afterwards silk or cotton; Lat., bombax; Italian, bombagio.

l. 12, **huffing**, swelling, arrogant.

Cf. Butler, "Hudibras," Part II. canto iii.

"There's but a twinkling of a star  
Between a man of peace and war,  
A thief and justice, fool and knave,  
A huffing officer and a slave."

See above, p. 16, l. 23.

l. 20, **cits**, citizens. The dramatic writers of the seventeenth century, whose chief patrons belonged to the upper classes, affected the greatest contempt for the middle classes who inhabited the city.

l. 26, **Gotham**. Gotham or Coteham is a village in Northamptonshire, six miles from the county town, at which one could hardly "land" from any fleet, even poor Settle's. It was the classical home of fools and noodles from mediæval times. "It was at Court Hill, a short distance southward of the village, where the natives are said to have attempted to hedge in the cuckoo, which gave rise to the proverb, 'As wise as a man of Gotham;' and the cuckoo-bush is still to be seen" (Moule's "English Counties," ii. 237\*). See Mr. Jacobs's "More English Fairy Tales," pp. 204, *seq.*, for this exploit of the cuckoo and other achievements of the wise men of Gotham; and do not overlook his note, pp. 242, 243.

l. 31, **to the consciousness of weakness**. Cf. Introduction, p. xxvii, above.

l. 34, "**Mock Astrologer**" (Scott's "Dryden," ii. 207). "An Evening's Love, or the Mock Astrologer," acted at the King's Theatre, June 12th, 1668, and printed in the same year. Pepys saw it twice in the month (June 20th and 22nd), and says that Herringman (a bookseller who published for Dryden, and with whom Dryden lodged for some years) "tells me Dryden himself calls it but a fifth-rate play." Mr. Saintsbury, however, regards it as one of the best of Dryden's comedies. It was founded on "Le Feint Astrologue" of Thomas Corneille.

l. 35, **duke of Newcastle**. William Cavendish, Duke of Newcastle (1592-1676), who took an important, though not a brilliant part on the king's side during the Civil War, described by Clarendon as "a very fine gentleman." He was a patron in a small way of Gassendi, Descartes, Hobbes, Dryden, and Shadwell, as well as a great supporter of the turf and the cockpit.

p. 14, l. 1, **his lady**. Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle (died 1674), a clever and eccentric woman who wrote a large number of works, including an autobiography and a life

of the Duke her husband. Pepys speaks of the two as "a mad, conceited, ridiculous woman, and he an ass to suffer her to write what she writes to him and of him" (March 18th, 1668).

l. 4, **treatise on horsemanship.** "La Methode et Invention nouvelle de dresser les chevaux." A folio published at Antwerp, 1657, with over forty large plates. It was followed by a separate and distinct work, called "A new Method and extra-ordinary Invention to dress Horses, and work them according to Nature" (London, 1667), which is said to be "neither a translation of the former, nor an absolutely necessary addition to it; and may be of use without the other, as the other has been hitherto, and still is, without this; but both together will unquestionless do best." The Duke wrote several forgotten comedies.

l. 8, **he says.** Scott's "Dryden," iii. 230.

l. 9, **Cinthio.** Giovanni Battista Giraldi, surnamed Cinthio (1504-1573), a famous Italian poet and critic, published his "Hecatombithi," or Hundred Stories, in 1565.

Shakespeare seems to have been indebted to Cinthio for hints only in the case of "Othello," and perhaps "Measure for Measure." To Painter's "Palace of Pleasure," the great collection of Italian "novels" taken from Boccaccio, Bandello, Queen Margaret of Anjou and other sources, Shakespeare and many other Elizabethan dramatists owed most of their plots which were not taken direct from English or Roman history. See Jacobs's edition of the "Palace of Pleasure," vol. i. pp. xxxi, *seq.*

l. 9, **in Spanish Stories.** This is not the case. Like most of their brethren, Beaumont and Fletcher are mainly indebted to Italian sources. Dryden mentions as instances, "The Chances," "The Spanish Curate," "Rule a Wife and Have a Wife," and "The Little French Lawyer."

l. 21, "**Tyrannic Love, or the Virgin Martyr**" (Scott's "Dryden," iii. 343, *seq.*). Johnson misquotes the title, which should run, "Tyrannic Love, or the *Royal Martyr*." The tragedy was produced at the King's Theatre in 1669, and printed in 1670. Nell Gwyn did not play the royal martyr, St. Catherine, as is sometimes asserted; but Valeria. "Mrs. Ellen," however, delivered the epilogue.

l. 24, **Maximin.** The Emperor Maximin was one of the principal characters.

l. 25, **his own confession.** "A famous modern poet used to sacrifice every year a Statius to Virgil's manes; and I have indignation enough to burn a 'D'Ambois' ['Bussy D'Ambois' by Chapman] to the memory of Johnson. But now, my lord, I am sensible, perhaps too late, that I have gone too far; for I

remember some verses of my own, Maximin ['Tyrannic Love'] and Almanzor ['Conquest of Granada'], which cry vengeance upon me for their extravagance, and which I wish heartily in the same fire with Statius and Chapman."—Dryden's dedication of his "Spanish Friar" (1681). See Scott's "Dryden," vi. 376.

l. 26, **he takes care.** In the preface. See Scott's "Dryden," iii. 352.

l. 31, **published after it.** This is a mistake. "Tyrannic Love" was published in 1670; the "Conquest of Granada" in 1672.

p. 15, l. 7, "**Conquest of Granada.**" "Almanzor and Almahide, or the Conquest of Granada," produced at the King's Theatre, Drury Lane in 1670, printed in 1672. Each part contains five acts.

l. 13, **Almanzor.** The Moorish hero, who turned out to be a Christian and a nobleman.

l. 23, **In the Epilogue.** See Globe, p. 410. In this, Dryden attacks Ben Jonson and his contemporaries.

"Thus Jonson did mechanic humour show  
When men were dull and conversation low.  
Then comedy was faultless, but 'twas coarse :  
Cobb's tankard was a jest and Otter's horse.  
And as their comedy, their tone was mean ;  
Except by chance in some one laboured scene."

l. 26, **a long postscript.** "Defence of the Epilogue, or an Essay on the Dramatic Poetry of the Last Age," published with the play in 1672.

p. 16, l. 2, **Martin Clifford.** "He was made Master of the Charter House, November 17th, 1671, and dying December 10th, 1677, was buried in St. Margaret's, Westminster. The monument which Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, had ordered to his memory was returned on the sculptor's hands at the Duke's death" (Cunningham).

His strictures are contained in "Notes upon Mr. Dryden's Poems in Four Letters" (London, 1687). The letters only occupy sixteen pages. He also wrote a "Treatise of Human Reason."

l. 3, **Sprat.** See p. 126, above.

l. 8, **Dr. Percy.** Thomas Percy (1729-1811) educated at Bridgnorth and Christ Church, Oxford. He became a great friend of Dr. Johnson, who had the highest opinion of him, and was one of the original members of the Literary Club. He published his famous "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry" in

1765. In 1778 he became Dean of Carlisle; and in 1782, Bishop of Dromore.

l. 23, **Huffcap**, bully. See p. 134, above. Huffcap was a nickname for strong ale, and is so used by Stubbes in his "Anatomy of Abuses" (1583).

l. 25, **Lyndaraxa**, a heroine of the "Conquest of Granada."

l. 25, **Almeria**, a heroine in the "Indian Emperor" and "daughter to the late Indian Queen."

l. 32, **vindication of his own lines**. "Notes and Observations on the Empress of Morocco Revised" (1674), afterwards republished as "Reflections on Several of Mr. Dryden's Plays" (1687).

The quotations made by Johnson from this pamphlet are all run on, without indication of the breaks between them, and become almost unintelligible on that account. No previous editor has, I think, taken the trouble to separate them, and give references.

p. 17, l. 9, "**Fate after him**." Quoted by Settle from "Conquest of Granada," on p. 53 of his pamphlet.

l. 14, "**I'll travel then**." Act v. of "Empress of Morocco."

l. 17, **makes this remark**. Settle is good enough to quote in full nearly all of Dryden's (or Crowne's) criticism. Settle's pamphlet, p. 70.

l. 21, **So sphere must not be sense**. Settle's pamphlet, p. 70.

p. 18, l. 1, **Because Elkanah's similes**. This begins a fresh quotation from the pamphlet, p. 74.

l. 3, **simile in the "Annus Mirabilis"**. Stanzas 151-153.

l. 34, "**It had been much more to his purpose**." Settle's pamphlet, p. 77. The verses which immediately follow (on the top of p. 19) are entirely separate and distinct quotations from the "Conquest of Granada," and are so printed by Settle; though printed as one confused passage by Johnson and Johnson's editors.

p. 19, l. 18, **Poor Robin**. "Poor Robin's Almanack," first published about 1661. There is a baseless tradition that Herrick the poet was its first editor. On the title-page we read, "Written by Poor Robin, Knight of the Burnt Island, a well-wisher to Mathematicks."

l. 33, "**The people like a headlong torrent go**." Quoted by Settle on p. 80, from the "Conquest of Granada."

p. 20, l. 22, "**And for fancy**." This begins a fresh passage from Settle's pamphlet, p. 82.

l. 25, "**Old father Thames**." "Annus Mirabilis," stanza 232.

p. 21, l. 1, "**This Almanzor speaks**." This begins a fresh

passage from Settle's pamphlet, p. 84. His quotation (lines 6 and 7) is again from the "Conquest of Granada."

l. 17, "**Marriage à-la-Mode**" (Scott's "Dryden," iv. 231). This was first played at the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre (the Duke's House) by the King's Company, whose own theatre in Drury Lane had been burned, 1672. It was published in 1673.

l. 18, **Earl of Rochester**. John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647-1680), a dissipated courtier, with some pretensions to rank as an author. He served with distinction in the Dutch war. "He was, except in intellect, the worst of all the courtiers of the time, because he was one of the most radically unamiable." On Dryden's later relations with him see pp. 30, 31, and 147, above, and compare Mr. Saintsbury's "Dryden" ("English Men of Letters," pp. 68-70).

l. 21, **tradition always represents**. Johnson seems to forget that he himself had rightly represented Rochester as Dryden's enemy. It was not till 1679 that Rochester's malice took an overt form.

l. 23, **mentioned by him**. "Essay on Satire," Scott's "Dryden," xiii. 7.

l. 25, "**The Assignation**" (Scott's "Dryden," iv. 343). Played in 1672; printed 1673.

l. 26, **as the author says**. "It succeeded ill in the representation against the opinion of many of the best judges of our age, to whom you know I read it, ere it was presented publicly. Whether the fault was in the play itself, or in the lameness of the action, or in the number of its enemies who came resolved to damn it for its title [viz., the second title, "Love in a Nunnery," which would offend the Roman Catholics] I will not now dispute" (Dryden's dedication to Sedley).

l. 28, **Sir Charles Sedley** (1639-1701), courtier and poet, author of the "Mulberry Garden" (1668) and some other plays. He is the Lisideius of Dryden's "Essay of Dramatic Poesy." See p. 129, above.

l. 31, "**Amboyna**." The title of this play indicates its nature. "Amboyna, or the Cruelties of the Dutch to the English Merchants." It was played at the King's Theatre, Drury Lane, in 1673, to gain popularity for the war between England and France on the one side and the Dutch on the other. There had been in 1623 a massacre of English residents at Amboyna, one of the Molucca Islands, by the Dutch, who desired to keep the sole right of trading there. In Cromwell's time the Dutch had promised to pay a large indemnity for this act (Scott's "Dryden," v. 1).

l. 32, "**The Virgin Martyr**." "Tyrannic Love, or the Royal Martyr." See pp. 14 and 135.

p. 22, l. 4, in his **Epilogue**. Globe, p. 419.

“ A poet once the Spartans led to fight,  
And made them conquer in the Muses' right ;  
So would our poet lead you on this day,  
Showing your tortured fathers in his play.”

l. 5, **Tyrtæus**. Tyrtæus is said to have been a blind school-master whom the Athenians sent to Sparta during the second Messenian war as leader, on the application of the Spartans (in obedience to an order which bade them apply to Athens). The Athenians sent the man they thought least likely to help their rivals ; but the songs of Tyrtæus so animated the Spartans that they conquered the Messenians (668 B.C.).

l. 8, “ **Troilus and Cressida** ” (Scott's “ Dryden,” vi. 227). The second title is “ Truth found too late.” It was played at the new theatre built in Dorset Gardens for the Duke's Company, 1679, and published in the same year.

l. 9, in **Langbaine's opinion**. “ Account of the English Dramatic Poets,” 1691, p. 173.

l. 12, **Rymer's book**. “ The Tragedies of the Last Age Considered and Examined by the Practice of the Ancients and by the Common Sense of all Ages ” (1678), by Thomas Rymer (1639-1713), who afterwards compiled the “ *Fœdera*.”

Macaulay, in one of his most reckless passages, speaks of Rymer as “ the worst critic that ever lived.” He was, in reality, a critic of some shrewdness, and far from deserving such a condemnation. Rymer was one of the first avowed defenders of the ideal of classical “ correctness ” (see Introduction, pp. xx, *seq.*, above), and thus occupies a not unimportant place in the history of English literature.

l. 14, “ **Spanish Friar** ” (Scott's “ Dryden,” vi. 365). “ The Spanish Friar, or the Double Discovery,” was acted at the Duke's Theatre in Dorset Gardens, 1681, and printed, with a dedication to John, Lord Haughton, next year. It remained a favourite play till the middle of the eighteenth century.

l. 26, **says he**. “ The truth is, the audiences are grown weary of continued melancholy scenes : and I dare venture to prophesy, that few Tragedies, except those in verse, shall succeed in this age, if they are not lightened with a course of mirth. For the feast is too dull and solemn without the fiddles. But however difficult a task this is, will soon be tried ; for a several genius is required to either way ; and without both of 'em, a man, in my opinion, is but half a poet for the stage.”

l. 28, “ **Duke of Guise** ” (Scott's “ Dryden,” vii. 1). This play was produced at the Drury Lane House, by the united companies known as the King's and the Duke's, in November,

1682, and printed in 1683. Dryden wrote the first scene, all act iv., and part of act v.

l. 29, **Lee**. Nathaniel Lee (1657-1692), a dramatic poet who wrote "Nero" (1675) and a dozen other tragedies. He had already collaborated with Dryden in the production of "Ædipus" (1679), which Johnson describes a few pages later (p. 25).

p. 23, l. 2, **says Dryden**. The quotation is from Dryden's "Vindication of the Duke of Guise." See Scott's "Dryden," vii. 139, 140. Johnson has silently omitted several lines between the two sentences he quotes.

l. 10, **Leaguers**. The Catholic League was formed by the Duke of Guise in 1576 for the purpose of opposing the Huguenots and maintaining the Catholic character of the French government. Before the death of Henry III. the League was in open rebellion; and when the crown passed to the Huguenot prince, Henry IV., the League took the field against him; but its power was crushed at the battle of Ivry, 1590.

l. 13, "**Albion and Albanus**" (Scott's "Dryden," vii. 209). This opera, the music to which was composed by Grabut, the master of the king's band, was played in June, 1685. "Albion" represented King Charles, and "Albanus," the Duke of York. The play was acted only six times. The sudden landing of the Duke of Monmouth is said to have caused its withdrawal. The play, "not answering half the charge they were at, involved the company very much in debt" (Downes, "Roscius Anglicanus," quoted by Cunningham).

l. 16, "**The State of Innocence**" (Scott's "Dryden," v. 89). This was never acted. It was published in 1674, eleven years before the last play mentioned by Johnson.

It should not be forgotten that Milton's "Paradise Lost" was suggested by a play, the "Adamo" of Andreini, and that he himself originally thought of casting it into a dramatic form. Compare Johnson's "Life of Milton" (Bell's English Classics), pp. 26, *seq.*

Aubrey's story about Dryden's visit to Milton to ask for permission to turn his "Paradise Lost" into a rhymed play, with Milton's answer, that he would give him leave to tag his verses, is well known.

l. 18, **decently**, with reverence or propriety.

l. 20, **Marvel**. Andrew Marvell (1621-1678), the poet and Member of Parliament for Hull. He had been Milton's assistant as Latin secretary. See Johnson's "Life of Milton" (Bell's English Classics), pp. 32, 115.

The quotation will be found in his poem, "On Milton's 'Paradise Lost.'"

l. 28, **raised it in a month**. See the "Author's Apology for

Heroic Poetry," prefixed to "The State of Innocence" (Scott's "Dryden," v. 105).

l. 29, **Princess of Modena.** Mary, second wife of James, Duke of York.

p. 24, l. 1, **The preface.** The "Author's Apology for Heroic Poetry" contains the following passage, which is one of the many evidences of Dryden's great admiration for Milton: "After this, I cannot, without injury to the deceased author of 'Paradise Lost,' but acknowledge that this poem has received its entire foundation, part of the design, and many of the ornaments from him. What I have borrowed will be so easily discerned from my meaner productions, that I shall not need to point the Reader to the places. And, truly, I should be sorry for my own sake, that any one should take the pains to compare them together; the original being undoubtedly one of the greatest, most noble, and most sublime poems, which either this age or nation has produced." He goes on to speak humbly of the extravagant praise which his friend Lee had lavished on him in his introductory verses printed before the tragedy. They contain such lines as these:

"To the dead bard your fame a little owes,  
For Milton did the wealthy mine disclose,  
And rudely cast what you could well dispose.  
He roughly drew, on an old-fashioned ground,  
A chaos; for no perfect world was found,  
Till through the heap your mighty Genius shined:  
This was the golden ore, which you refined."

l. 5, **which he gives.** "Author's Apology" (Scott's "Dryden," v. 105).

l. 6, **overpassed.** This may mean overlooked, or surpassed.

l. 17, **"Aureng Zebe"** (Scott's "Dryden," v. 285). Produced at Drury Lane in 1675, and published next year.

l. 18, **great prince.** Aurangzeb, the son of Shah Jehan, began to reign as Padishah or Emperor of Hindostan in 1659. He warred against the Mahrattas and persecuted the Hindoos. He died in 1707. "With all his faults he was a great and far-seeing sovereign. He realized the dream of conquest which filled the imagination of the illustrious Akbar." See Talboys Wheeler, "College History of India," pp. 92, *seq.*

l. 26, **in rhyme.** But it is the last in rhyme. In the Prologue Dryden says that he

"To confess a truth, though out of time,  
Grows weary of his long-loved mistress, Rhyme."

See Globe, p. 427.



1. 30, **The complaint of life.**

“When I consider life, ’tis all a cheat.  
 Yet fooled with hope, men favour the deceit,  
 Trust on, and think to-morrow will repay.  
 To-morrow’s falser than the former day,  
 Lies worse, and while it says we shall be blest  
 With some new joys, cuts off what we possess.  
 Strange cozenage! none would live past years again,  
 Yet all hope pleasure in what yet remain,  
 And from the dregs of life think to receive  
 What the first sprightly running could not give.  
 I’m tired with waiting for the chemic gold  
 Which fools us young and beggars us when old.”  
 (“Aureng Zebe,” Act iv., sc. 1.)

1. 33, **Earl of Mulgrave.** John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, afterwards Duke of Buckinghamshire, author of a famous “Essay on Satire,” and an “Essay on Poetry.” See Johnson’s “Lives” (Bohn), ii. 165, *seq.*

p. 25, l. 5, **says he.** “Epistle Dedicatory” prefixed to “Aureng Zebe” (Scott’s “Dryden,” v. 183). Scott thinks that the subject was to be the exploits of the Black Prince.

l. 8, **“All for Love”** (Scott’s “Dryden,” v. 285). Played at the King’s Theatre in 1678, and printed in the same year. It was his first play, written in blank verse, and is usually considered Dryden’s finest dramatic effort. In the Prologue the author forebodes failure:

“You’ve watched your time,  
 He fights this day unarmed, without his rhyme.”

Globe, p. 433.

l. 24, **“Limberham”** (Scott’s “Dryden,” vi. 1). “The Kind Keeper, or, Mr. Limberham,” a comedy, was produced at the Duke’s Theatre, Dorset Gardens, in 1678. It was printed in the same year.

l. 26, **as the author says.** See Dryden’s dedication of the play to John, Lord Vaughan (Scott’s “Dryden,” vi. 10).

Malone in his “Life of Dryden” (p. 118) tells us that he had seen a MS. copy of the play “which had been found by Lord Bolingbroke among the sweepings of Pope’s study, in which a pen had been drawn through several exceptionable passages that do not appear in the printed play.”

l. 29, **imputes its expulsion.** See Langbaine, “Account of the English Dramatic Poets” (1691), p. 164.

The character of Limberham has been said to be a satirical representation of the dissolute and hateful Lauderdale; and it

has been suggested that Lauderdale's friends had something to do with the adverse reception of the play. But there is no evidence for this; nor had Lauderdale many friends.

1. 31, "**Œdipus**" (Scott's "Dryden," vi. 115). Produced at the Duke's Theatre, Dorset Gardens, in 1678, and printed 1679.

Dryden himself mentions the sources of the play in the Epilogue.

"What Sophocles could undertake alone,  
Our poets found a work for more than one;  
And therefore two lay tugging at the piece,  
Both yoked to draw the ponderous mass from Greece;  
A weight that bent even Seneca's strong Muse,  
And which Corneille's shoulders did refuse."

(Globe, p. 439.)

In his "Vindication of the Duke of Guise" Dryden says, "I writ the first and third acts of 'Œdipus,' and drew the scenery of the whole play."

1. 35, "**Don Sebastian**" (Scott's "Dryden," vii. 271). A tragedy produced in 1690, and printed the same year. It was Dryden's first play after the Revolution; he had written nothing for the stage since "Albion and Albanus," 1695. It did not meet with much success.

p. 26, l. 12, **reconciliation of Dorax and Sebastian**. Act iv., sc. 3.

1. 16, "**Amphitryon**" (Scott's "Dryden," viii. 1). "Amphitryon, or the Two Sosias," is a farcical comedy on the same lines as the "Menæchmi" of Plautus and the "Comedy of Errors" of Shakespeare. It was produced at the King's Theatre, in 1690, and printed the same year.

1. 20, "**Cleomenes**" (Scott's "Dryden," viii. 181). "Cleomenes, or the Spartan Hero," was acted and published in 1692.

1. 28, "**King Arthur**." "King Arthur, or the British Worthy," was acted and published in 1691. Purcell wrote the music (Scott's "Dryden," viii. 167).

1. 30, **to have been ever brought upon the stage**. A curious instance of Johnson's carelessness. It was played with considerable success; and Johnson, two or three lines below, actually speaks of its public exhibition being suddenly stopped by the rebellion of Monmouth. It was written before the death of Charles II., but not, I think, performed until 1691.

1. 31, **Marquis of Halifax**. George Saville, Marquis of Halifax (died 1695), the "trimmer."

1. 33, **his latter life**. Dryden's, apparently. The Epistle Dedicatory contains a few autobiographical details.

p. 27, l. 3, "**Love Triumphant**" (Scott's "Dryden," viii. 331).

"Love Triumphant, or Nature Will Prevail," a tragi-comedy, was produced in 1694, and unsuccessfully, as Johnson relates.

In the Prologue and Epilogue Dryden formally took leave of the stage.

l. 4, **Earl of Salisbury.** James, the fourth Earl. There was some connection between Dryden's wife and the Cecil family, to which Dryden alludes (Scott's "Dryden," viii. 3, *seq.*).

l. 23, **but a single night.** The author was paid chiefly by the profits of the third representation. In later times he had the sixth, and the ninth days—for plays were still acted in the afternoon—as well. See the very interesting passages, too long to quote, which Cunningham gives in his edition of the "Lives," i. 299. Pope, in a well-known couplet ("Dunciad," bk. i. 57) speaks of a "warm third day." It must be remembered that theatrical pieces were played only for short "runs" in those days. See the note to Johnson's "Life of Addison" (Bell's English Classics, p. 105).

Strictly speaking Dryden does not seem to have ordinarily received the profits of the third day. He was paid for his plays beforehand; but on his complaint the actors "did also, at his earnest request, give him a third day for his last new play called 'All for Love,' and at the receipt of the money of the said third day, he acknowledged it as a gift and a particular kindness of the company." This is from the "Memorial of the King's Players" to the Lord Chamberlain, about 1678, complaining that Dryden had not fulfilled his contract to give them three new plays a year, but was writing with Lee for the Duke's Players, first printed by Malone, and given by Scott and Cunningham. Pope told Spence ("Anecdotes," ed. 1858, p. 198) that in Dryden's time "ten broad pieces was the usual highest price for a play; and if they get fifty pounds more for the acting, it was reckoned very well." In the case of "Cleomenes" we know that Dryden got thirty guineas only.

l. 24, **Southern.** Thomas Southerne (1660-1746), the author of the "Persian Prince" (1682), "Isabella, or the False Marriage" (1692), and other popular plays.

Pope has the following couplet on Southerne:

"Tom, whom Heaven sent down to raise  
The price of prologues and of plays."

(Globe edition of "Pope," p. 501.)

l. 25, **Rowe.** Nicholas Rowe (1674-1718), the author of the "Ambitious Stepmother" (1700), "Jane Shore" (1713), and other plays. He translated Lucan and edited Shakespeare, and was poet laureate from 1715 till his death. See Johnson's "Lives," Bohn, ii. 73.

l. 26, **arts of improving a poet's profit.** "Johnson alludes, perhaps, to Southerne, who used to solicit people to buy tickets for the performances of the plays, and use every means for the increase of his profits. Dryden was annoyed to hear him own that he had made £700 by one play" (Milnes).

l. 29, **the copy.** The technical name for MS. which is to be printed.

p. 28, l. 6, **Swift.** Swift's family was connected both with Davenant and Dryden. One of his cousins was named Dryden Swift, "called so after his mother, who was a near relation to Mr. Dryden, the poet" (from Swift's autobiographical account; see Forster's "Life of Swift," p. 11). Joseph Warton, in his "Essay on Pope," relates the following anecdote: "I heard my father say that Mr. Elijah Fenton, who was his intimate friend, and had been his master, informed him that Dryden upon seeing some of Swift's earliest verses, said to him, 'Young man, you will never be a poet.'"

Malone attempted unsuccessfully to trace the passage in Swift's Works to which Johnson refers. He quotes, however, a sentence from the preface to "Ædipus," which Johnson may have had in his mind: "But we have given you more than was necessary for a preface; and for aught we know, may gain no more by our instructions than that politic nation is like to do, who have taught their enemies to fight so long, that at last they are in a condition to invade them." See Malone's "Life of Dryden," p. 240, note.

l. 14, **he demanded three.** "According to Warburton [note in "Pope"] the rise was from *four* to *six* guineas. According to Shiels and the younger Cibber ["Lives," v. 328] from *five* to ten.

I have looked into this subject very carefully, and am convinced that Johnson is right" (Cunningham).

l. 17, **he declares.** Dryden did not say that his genius was not dramatic, but that it was not comic. "I confess my chief endeavours are to delight the age in which I live. If the humour of this be for low comedy, small accidents and railery, I will force my genius to obey it, though with more reputation I could write in verse. I know I am not fitted by nature to write comedy; I want that gaiety of humour which is required for it. My conversation is slow and dull; my humour saturnine and reserved; in short I am none of those who endeavour to break jests in company, or make repartees" (Dryden, "Defence of Essay," 1668).

l. 20, **four plays a year.** Dryden promised the King's Company three, not four, plays a year. See the "Memorial of the King's Players" to the Lord Chamberlain, first printed by Malone, and given by Cunningham ("Lives," i. 392).

l. 24, **six complete plays**. Johnson, misled by Langbaine, is in error here. Of the six he mentions only one, "All for Love," was published in 1678. See "Chronological Table," Introduction, p. xxxi. Malone points out that in his period of greatest dramatic activity, between the beginning of 1667 and the middle of 1670, he only produced seven plays.

l. 25, **Langbaine's charges of plagiarism**. See "Account of English Dramatic Poets" (1691).

l. 28, **Lopez de Vega**. Lope de Vega Carpio (1562-1635), the famous Spanish dramatist, who began writing plays before he was twelve, and wrote altogether about fifteen hundred, or according to some authorities, over two thousand. He sometimes produced a play in three or four hours.

"He required no more than four and twenty hours to write a versified drama in three acts . . . abounding in intrigues, prodigies, and interesting situations" (Bouterwek). See Hallam, "History of European Literature," ii. 255.

l. 28, **Duke of Buckingham**. Villiers; not Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, afterwards Duke of Buckinghamshire, who was a friend of Dryden.

p. 29, l. 1, **The "Rehearsal"**. See pp. 5, 127, above. It was acted in December, 1671.

l. 4, **his chaplain**. Sprat being chaplain to Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, by Cowley's recommendation. Johnson's "Lives," Bohn, ii. 42.

l. 20, **These contradictions**. The dates assigned by Johnson to Dryden's plays are, as before remarked, nearly all wrong. The "Conquest of Granada" was acted in 1670 and published in 1672; "The Assignation" was acted in 1672 and published in 1673; "Marriage à-la-Mode," although published in 1673, was acted in 1672; "Tyrannic Love" was acted in 1669 and printed in 1670.

Many alterations were made in the "Rehearsal" after its first publication; so that there is nothing antecedently improvable in the statement that it contains allusions to all these plays.

l. 24, **Bilboa**. This name does not occur in the printed "Rehearsal."

l. 28, **hurts his nose**. See Act ii., sc. 5; Act iii., sc. 1.

p. 30, l. 4, **cant**, meaning originally to sing, to speak in a whining way, comes to mean affected or slang expressions peculiar to a profession or party. Thus North's "Examen" speaks of the word "sham" as "true cant of the Newmarket breed." From Latin, *cantare*.

l. 7, **blooded and purged**. "When I have a grand design in hand, I ever take physic and let blood; for, when you would have pure singleness of thought and fiery flights of fancy, you

must have a care of the pensive part. In fine, you must purge the stomach " ("Rehearsal," Act ii., sc. 1).

l. 7, **Lamotte.** Charles Lamotte published in 1730 an "Essay on Poetry and Painting with relation to History." "Johnson doubtless quoted from memory, for there does not appear to be any such passage in the essay" (Milnes).

Lowndes gives 1699 as the date of the "Essay." Lamotte was a fellow of the Royal Society, and was chaplain to the Duke of Montague.

l. 10, **debate between Love and Honour.** "Rehearsal," Act iii., sc. 5.

p. 81, l. 13, **eight-and-twenty.** This includes those pieces in which Dryden had only a share, *e.g.*, the "Indian Queen," "The Tempest," "Œdipus."

l. 18, "**An Essay on Satire.**" The "true writer" of this poem was, as Johnson says, John Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, afterwards Duke of Buckinghamshire. But Dryden is supposed to have corrected it. See Johnson, "Lives," Bohn, ii. 171.

l. 19, **dutchess of Portsmouth.** Louise de Querouaille (died 1734), a Frenchwoman, who became the mistress of Charles II. and was created Duchess of Portsmouth in 1673. She was employed as an intermediary by Charles and Louis XIV.

l. 23, **waylaid and beaten.** As Dryden was returning home to Long Acre on the evening of December 18th, 1679, he was waylaid in Rose Street, Covent Garden (then a narrow alley, one end of which opened into Long Acre), and severely beaten. Although a reward of £50 was offered the ruffians were not discovered. Letters from Rochester to his friend Henry Savile make it, however, practically certain that it was he who prompted and paid for the outrage.

"You wrote me word," he says, "that I'm out of favour with a certain poet, whom I have admired [wondered at] for the disproportion of him and his attributes. He is a rarity that I cannot be fond of, as one is fond of a hog that could fiddle, or a singing owl. If he falls on me at the blunt, which is his very good weapon in wit, I will forgive him if you please, and leave the repartee to Black Will with a cudgell."

l. 26, "**Though prais'd and beaten.**" Mulgrave added a note in a late edition (1717), in which he says, "for which Mr. Dryden was both applauded and beaten, though not only innocent but ignorant of the whole matter."

The callous brutality of the age, which regarded such an outrage as a good joke, dishonouring the victim rather than the perpetrator, is reflected in Mulgrave's own lines. The insignificance of the mere author, and the impunity of the black-guard nobleman, seemed natural enough in those days.

l. 32, "**Life of Polybius.**" "The History of Polybius," translated by Sir H. S. [Sir Henry Shears]: to which is added a Character of Polybius and his Writings by Mr. Dryden." 1693.

Polybius, a Greek patriot and historian (about 204-122 B.C.) who was transported to Rome as a youth after the conquest of Macedonia, and was a witness of the final ruin of Greek independence. His "History" gives an account of the Roman conquest of Greece, and is of great value.

l. 33, **Lucian.** "The Works of Lucian translated from the Greek by several eminent Hands [viz., Moyle, Shears, and Blount]. With the Life of Lucian written by J. Dryden, Esq." 1711.

Lucianus (about 120-about 170 A.D.), rhetorician and author, whose "Sale of the Philosophers" and "Dialogues of the Dead" are amongst the most famous satirical writings of antiquity.

l. 34, **Plutarch.** "Plutarch's Lives translated from the Greek by several Hands: to which is prefixed the Life of Plutarch by Mr. J. Dryden." 1683-1686.

Plutarchus, a Greek biographer and novelist of the first century, A.D., who wrote "Parallel Lives" of famous Greeks and Romans.

p. 32, l. 1, **the "Tacitus."** "The Annals and History of Tacitus, made English by several Hands; With Political Reflection, and Historical Notes by Mons. Amelot de la Houssaye and Sir Henry Savile." 1698.

C. Cornelius Tacitus, the famous Roman historian of the first century.

l. 2, **Gordon.** Thomas Gordon, a later translator of Tacitus. He makes the assertion in the preface of his translation, 1728: "Dryden has translated the first book; but has done it almost literally from M. Amelot de la Houssaye."

l. 5, **the literature,** the knowledge of classical language and literature.

l. 10, "**Epistles of Ovid.**" "Epistles of Ovid translated by several Hands," 1680. Two were by Dryden and one by Dryden and Lord Mulgrave. See Scott's "Dryden," xii.

l. 15, **discourse upon translation.** Scott's "Dryden," xii. 1, *seq.*

l. 17, **verbal interpretation,** attempt to translate every word of the author, over-literal translation. See Johnson, "Idler," No. 69. Compare his "Life of Pope," Bell's English Classics, pp. 108, 208.

l. 20, **Jonson, Sandys, Holyday.** Ben Jonson (1573-1637) had translated Horace's "Art of Poetry" and a few of his "Odes."

George Sandys (1577-1644) the traveller, translated Ovid's "Metamorphoses" (1626).

Barten Holyday (1593-1661) translated Juvenal and Persius (1673).

l. 23, **Fanshaw, Denham, Waller, and Cowley.** Sir Richard Fanshawe (1608-1666) translated Guarini's "Pastor Fido" (1647) and Camoens's "Lusiad" (1655).

Sir John Denham (1615-1668) translated the second book of the "Æneid." See Johnson's "Lives," Bohn, i. 88.

Edmund Waller (1605-1687) translated a few fragments of Virgil, including part of "Æneid," book iv.

Abraham Cowley (1618-1667) translated or paraphrased several pieces by Horace, Martial, and other Latin poets. These will chiefly be found in the "Essays in Verse and Prose."

l. 28, "**Absalom and Achitophel.**" Globe, p. 87. For the story of Absalom's rebellion refer to II. Samuel xv.-xviii.

l. 34, **my father, an old bookseller.** Introduction, p. ix.

p. 33, l. 1, **Addison has attempted to derive.** "Addison has nowhere, that I can find, expressly mentioned the poem of 'Absalom and Achitophel;' I suppose, therefore, that Dr. Johnson alluded to the 567th paper of the 'Spectator' on the art of rendering party-writings 'more taking than ordinary' by printing initial letters instead of proper names" (Malone, quoted by Cunningham and Milnes).

Mr. Wheeler's admirable "Digest Index to the 'Spectator,'" however, gives us the reference we want, viz., No. 512. "This natural pride and ambition of the soul is very much gratified in the reading of a Fable: for in writings of this kind, the reader comes in for half the performance; everything appears to him like a discovery of his own; he is busied all the while in applying characters and circumstances. For this reason 'Absalom and Achitophel' was one of the most popular poems that ever appeared in English. The poetry is indeed very fine, but had it been much finer, it would not have so much pleased, without a plan which gave the reader an opportunity of exerting his own talents."

l. 15, "**Dryden's Satire on his Muse.**" Malone seems to think Lord Somers the author.

l. 22, "**Azaria and Hushai**" was by Samuel Pordage, a wretched dramatist, who wrote "Herod and Mariamne" (1673).

"Absalom Senior, or Achitophel Transposed" was written by Settle. See p. 131, above. It makes Absalom represent the Duke of York. This unfortunate expedient, which forces him to

"Call young Absalom King David's brother,"

is alluded to in the lines on Doeg (vv. 412, *seq.*) which Dryden



inserted in Tate's Second Part of "Absalom and Achitophel." Fordage is alluded to in line 405 as "lame Mephibosheth, the wizard's son." His father, a clergyman, had been deprived of his benefice in Cromwell's time on the charge of conversation with evil spirits.

l. 26, as **Wood** says. Anthony à Wood (1632-1695), the author of the "Athenæ Oxoniensis" (1691-1692).

l. 31, **The "Medal."** Globe, p. 121, *seq.*

l. 32, **Shaftesbury's escape.** When Shaftesbury was accused of high treason, the grand jury at the Old Bailey, composed of Whig citizens, threw out the bill (then done by writing *ignoramus* on the indictment) November 24th, 1681. He was therefore never brought before the peers.

p. 34, l. 4, "**The Medal reversed.**" This was not written by Settle, but by Fordage, the author of "Azaria and Hushai."

l. 9, **forgotten in an hospital.** Settle died in the Charterhouse. This was both a school for boys and an hospital, or asylum for poor brethren (bachelors over fifty years of age). It was founded by Thomas Sutton, a London merchant, in 1611, on the ruins of the old Charterhouse, or Carthusian monastery originally founded by Sir Walter Murray. On Settle, see p. 131, above.

p. 35, l. 2, **convert to popery.** "Dryden, the famous playwright, and his two sons, and Mrs. Nelly (Miss to the late king), were said to go to mass; such proselytes were no great loss to the church" (Evelyn's "Diary," January 19th, 1686).

l. 3, **Sir Kenelm Digby** (1603-1665), son of the Sir Everard Digby who was concerned in the Gunpowder Plot, became a soldier, courtier, diplomatist, and author. He was the friend of Ben Jonson, Descartes, and Sir T. Browne. He was, perhaps, what Evelyn calls him, "an errant mountebank" (November 7th, 1651). He dabbled in alchemy and pseudo-science, and is best remembered by his "powder of sympathy," which cured wounds by being applied to the bandage. He rejoined the Roman Church in 1636, or earlier.

l. 4, **the two Rainolds.** Dr. John Rainolds, or Reynolds (1549-1607), and his brother William (died 1599). The former was a noted Oxford scholar. He is described as "the most eminently learned man" of Elizabeth's reign. "Yet his works," says Hallam, "are, I presume, read by nobody, nor am I aware that they are ever quoted; and Rainolds himself is chiefly known by the anecdote, that, having been educated in the Church of Rome, as his brother was in the Protestant communion, they mutually converted each other in the course of disputation. Rainolds was on the Puritan side, and took a part in

the Hampton Court conference" ("Literature of Europe," ii. 86). See Fuller's "Church History," bk. x.

l. 5, **Chillingworth**. William Chillingworth (1602-1643), a Latitudinarian divine, the author of the "Religion of Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation" (1637). He was worried by the Puritans, and like Hales was protected by Laud, whom it has been the fashion to misrepresent as a hopeless bigot.

l. 29, **sufficiently attractive**. Dr. Johnson felt the attraction which the Roman Church has commonly exercised on devout and conservative minds. Like modern high churchmen he preferred it to Presbyterianism, and considered its official doctrines as less open to objection than its actual practices. See Boswell, Bohn, ii. 104-107.

l. 32, **is also honest**. There is no adequate reason to doubt Dryden's sincerity. Like many persons brought up as Protestants, he had probably little idea of the strength of the case for Catholicism until he was overwhelmed by it. Unlike most of the courtiers at the time, Dryden remained a Romanist when conversion, or re-version, would almost certainly have benefited his prospects. Macaulay's account of Dryden is grossly unfair ("History," Student's edition, i. 424, *seq.*). Malone, Scott, Southey, and Mr. Saintsbury all argue in favour of his honesty; while Mr. Christie almost alone, among biographers, adopts the unfavourable view of Macaulay.

p. 36, l. 8, **found in the strong-box**. Two papers so found after Charles's death were published by James II. They contained "the arguments ordinarily used by Roman Catholics against Protestants," and, if authentic, went to prove that Charles had been a Romanist by conviction for some time before his death. James had them "printed with the utmost pomp of typography," and distributed them himself among his courtiers, and even among the people who thronged about his coach (Macaulay, "History," Student's edition, i. 349, 350). With these was a paper by Anne Hyde, James's first wife. All these were replied to by Stillingfleet. Dryden and other writers were employed to defend them. See Dryden's preface to the "Hind and Panther" (Globe, p. 222), where he explains that he was concerned only in the defence of the Duchess of York's paper. Stillingfleet replied to Dryden, and denied that Anne had died a Roman Catholic. The controversy went on for some time.

l. 10, **Stillingfleet**. Edward Stillingfleet (1635-1699) was at that time Dean of St. Paul's; he was afterwards Bishop of Worcester. He was a man of great polemical ability.

l. 12, **Maimbourg's "History"**. "Histoire de la Ligue" by Louis Maimbourg (died 1686), a Jesuit. The translation was

made by Dryden before his conversion, and published in 1684. It could not therefore have been undertaken by him "with hopes of promoting popery." The object seems to have been political rather than theological. There was, as we have seen, some parallelism between the position of the ultra-Protestant faction and that of the League. See p. 23, above. Scott's "Dryden," xvii. 77, *seq.*

The version was undertaken at the express desire of Charles II., and was dedicated to him. See Malone's "Life of Dryden," p. 185, 186.

l. 14, "**Life of Francis Xavier.**" This translation (1688) was undoubtedly by Dryden. It is included in Scott's "Dryden," and occupies a volume to itself (vol. xvi.). It is dedicated to the Queen. Dryden mentions in the dedication that St. Francis had been chosen by her as one of her patrons, and that owing to his intercession a son and heir would probably be given to James.

St. Francis Xavier (1506-1552) was one of the earliest disciples of Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits. He became a great missionary, and preached in India, the Moluccas, and Japan. His body is preserved at Goa.

The life which Dryden translated was by Dominique Bonhours (1702).

l. 19, **Brown.** Thomas Brown, of Shiffnal, Shropshire (died 1704), alluded to on p. 38 as "the facetious Thomas Brown," was a miscellaneous comic writer who enjoyed considerable popularity at the beginning of the eighteenth century. His collected works, published in several volumes after his death (1707-1708), passed through many editions. "The Reason of Mr. Bays' changing his Religion considered in a Dialogue between Crites, Eugenius, and Mr. Bays," was issued in 1691, or earlier, under the pseudonym of Dudley Tomkinson. There are many uncomplimentary references to Dryden in his works. Cunningham remarks that the three dialogues "were Brown's first productions; and are said by his editor to be those pieces to which he owed the reputation he afterwards obtained."

l. 23, **Varillas's "History of Heresies."** Dryden's name was not affixed to this. It is not included in Scott's edition. Antoine Varillas (died 1696) wrote a number of historical works. His "*Histoire des Révolutions arrivées dans l'Europe en matière de Religion*" (often called the "History of Heresies") was published at Paris, 1686-1689, in six volumes. Burnet replied to that part of the first volume which dealt with Wyclif and his followers in a little pamphlet called "Reflections upon M<sup>r</sup> Varillas, his History of Heresy, Book I. Tome I." (1688).

l. 26, **Burnet.** Gilbert Burnet (1643-1715), Bishop of Salis-

bury. His "Reflections on Mr. Varillas's History of Heresies" was published in 1686.

l. 24, an **"Answer."** The "Answer" was not by Dryden but by Varillas himself.

l. 25, **following observation.** What follows is quoted from Burnet's "Defence of the Reflections on the Ninth Book of the First Volume of Mr. Varillas's 'History of Heresies,'" 1687.

l. 25, **his "Answer."** The "his" in this phrase really refers to Varillas and not to Dryden, as Cunningham points out. Burnet explicitly recognized the "Answer" as from the pen of Varillas.

p. 37, l. 3, **that poem.** Dryden's "Hind and Panther."

l. 32, **"Hind and Panther."** "The Hind and the Panther, A Poem, in Three Parts," published in April, 1687. Globe, p. 221.

p. 38, l. 3, **"City Mouse and Country Mouse."** It was published in 1687. See Prior's "Works," Aldine edition, vol. ii. p. 316. Charles Montague, Earl of Halifax (1661-1715), whose literary reputation chiefly rests on his share in this parody. He became Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1694, and gained a great reputation as a financier. He originated the National Debt, instituted Exchequer Bills, founded the Bank of England, and reformed the coinage. He became a peer in 1699. See Johnson's "Lives of the Poets" (Bohn), ii. 51-56.

Matthew Prior (1664-1721) wrote "Alma" and much admirable *vers de société*. He obtained employment as a diplomatist, and helped to negotiate the Treaty of Utrecht. See Johnson's "Lives" (Bohn), ii. 173 and 425; and Mr. Aitken's article in the "Contemporary Review," May, 1890.

l. 20, **Brown was a man.** Notice the loose and clumsy construction of this paragraph. See Introduction, p. xxix.

p. 39, l. 1, **cit, citizen.** The "pewter-buttoned serjeant" is the sheriff's officer who arrested people for debt.

l. 6, **Chancery-lane parcel.** The unbound and unsold sheets were used to cover tradesmen's parcels. The shops in Chancery Lane were not the best in London.

l. 9, **the "Worth of a Penny."** Doubtless a highly moral work—I have come across no copy of it; it is not in the British Museum.

l. 17, **the "Cheats" and the "Committee."** "The Cheats" was a comedy by John Wilson, published about 1670. It was very anti-puritan.

"The Committee, or the Faithful Irishman," was a comedy written by Sir Robert Howard, about 1670. It ridicules the Puritans, and was very popular in Tory circles. "The last [play] I saw, said Sir Roger, was the 'Committee,' which I

should not have gone to neither had I not been told beforehand that it was a good Church-of-England comedy " (*"Spectator,"* No. 335).

l. 25, in a **Tyrant's quarrel**. This refers to Dryden's eulogistic verses on Cromwell. See p. 2, above.

p. 40, l. 5, **Shadwell**. Thomas Shadwell (1640-1692), a dramatist, amongst whose plays the best known is perhaps "*Epsom Wells*" (1676). His first play, the "*Sullen Lovers*," was produced in 1668 or 1669. Dryden wrote a prologue for his "*True Widow*" (1678). He attacked Dryden in the "*Medal of John Bayes*" (1682), and suffered swift vengeance in "*Mac Flecknoe*," and in the second part of "*Absalom and Achitophel*," both published in 1682. In the latter, after the scathing lines on Doeg (Settle), Dryden heaps still coarser vituperation on Og (Shadwell):

"Round as a globe, and liquored every chink,  
Goodly and great he sails behind his link.

\* \* \* \* \*

The midwife laid her hand on his thick skull,  
With this prophetic blessing, *Be thou dull!*"

(*Globe*, p. 165.)

It is only fair to say that Shadwell's comedies do not deserve the contempt which Dryden has brought upon them. They are bright and sometimes witty, and give interesting glimpses of the manners of the age.

l. 10, "**Mac Flecknoe**." "*Mac Flecknoe; or a Satire on the True Blue Protestant Poet, T. S.*" (1682) (*Globe*, p. 143).

Blue, it may be remarked, was the colour of the Presbyterian party and afterwards of the Whigs. Compare "*Hudibras*," Part I., canto i.:

"For his religion, it was fit,  
To match his learning and his wit  
'Twas Presbyterian true blue,  
For he was of that stubborn crew  
Of errant saints, whom all men grant  
To be the true church militant."

Johnson gives an erroneous account of the date and origin of "*Mac Flecknoe*." Dryden, as explained in the previous note, had quarrelled with Shadwell in 1682. It was in that year, not after the Revolution, that "*Mac Flecknoe*" was published.

The name "*Mac Flecknoe*" signifies the son of *Flecknoe*. Shadwell is represented as the adopted son and heir of the

wretched Irish priest and poetaster Richard Flecknoe, who died in 1678. Cunningham thinks that Dryden's dislike to Flecknoe himself originated in a "pamphlet signed R. F. (evidently Richard Flecknoe), written in vindication of Sir Robert Howard." This curious pamphlet was unknown to Johnson, Malone, and Scott.

l. 11, as **Pope himself declares**. See Pope's note to the "Dunciad," book ii. 2.

l. 14, **related by Prior**. In his dedication of his poems to the youthful Lionel, Earl of Dorset, son of the poet (Charles, Earl of Dorset), Prior gives many biographical details of the latter, and incidentally tells this anecdote, adding that Dorset, "while he gave him his assistance in private, in public he extenuated and pitied his error." This story is rejected by Mr. Christie.

On Charles Sackville, Earl of Dorset (1637-1706), the author of the famous lines, "To all you ladies, now on land," see Johnson's "Lives," Bohn, i. 313-316.

p. 41, l. 1, "**Don Sebastian**." This play was acted in 1690, and printed the same year. He had not produced anything on the stage since 1686. It was not one of his most successful dramas, though one of the best.

The "four dramas more" that Johnson mentions are "Amphitryon" (1690), "King Arthur" (1691), "Cleomenes" (1691), and "Love Triumphant" (1694), most of which have already been mentioned.

l. 3, **version of Juvenal and Persius**. Scott's "Dryden," xiii.

The satires, translated by Dryden himself, are given in the Aldine edition. Dr. Johnson said that this translation "preserved the wit, but wanted the dignity of the original."

l. 10, **ample preface**. Scott's "Dryden," xiii. 3, *seq.* This has been republished by the late Professor Morley in "Cassell's National Library" ("Discourses on Satire and on Epic Poetry"), and there is an edition with notes by Professor C. D. Yonge, "Essays of John Dryden."

l. 14, **some kind of supernatural agency**. The technical name of this was the "machinery." The passage to which Johnson refers will be found in Morley's edition, pp. 24-26, and Yonge's, pp. 19 *seq.*

l. 25, as **Boileau observes**. Dryden himself quotes Boileau, and Johnson's reference is apparently at second-hand; but he modifies the somewhat irreverent language of Dryden. See Boileau, "L'Art poétique," iii. 213.

Nicholas Boileau (1636-1711), the great French poet and critic, wrote "Lutrin" and "L'Art poétique," odes, epistles, and other works. He was the favourite critical authority of the "correct"

eighteenth-century poets, and is invariably referred to with the greatest respect by Dryden, Pope, and Johnson.

l. 29, **Rinaldo**. One of the heroes in Tasso's "Jerusalem Delivered." For his adventure in the enchanted wood, see the first forty stanzas of Canto 18.

l. 33, **justice can be but on one side**. It is perhaps hardly necessary to point out, that this is the exact opposite of the truth.

p. 42, l. 13, **says he**. This is in the preface to the "Fables" (1700). See *Globe*, p. 506.

l. 17, **Fresnoy's "Art of Painting"**. "De Arte Graphicâ. The Art of Painting, by C. A. Du Fresnoy, with Remarks. Translated into English, together with an Original Preface containing a Parallel betwixt Painting and Poetry. By Mr. Dryden. 1695." This translation is given in Scott's "Dryden," xxvii., and Dryden's Preface is included in Yonge's "Essays of John Dryden."

Charles Du Fresnoy (1611-1665), was a French painter and writer on art.

l. 22, **to produce them**. Notice the faulty grammatical construction.

l. 23, **works of Virgil**. Scott's "Dryden," vols. xiii.-xv.

l. 25, **lord Clifford**. Hugh, Lord Clifford, son of Lord Treasurer Clifford, who was one of the Cabal ministry. He died in 1730.

l. 26, **earl of Chesterfield**. This was Philip, second Earl, a handsome libertine, with whom (though Dryden may not have known it) the poet's wife had had immoral relations before her marriage. See p. 160, below.

l. 29, **Milbourne**. Luke Milbourne (died 1720), rector of Yarmouth. His pamphlet is called "Notes on Dryden's 'Virgil' in a Letter to a Friend, with an Essay on the same Poet" (1698). He had, in 1688, published a translation of the first book of the "Æneid."

l. 30, **styled by Pope**. See Pope's Note to the "Dunciad" on Book II., 349.

l. 33, **"Fables"** (*Globe*, pp. 489, *seq.*; Scott's "Dryden," xi.-xii). "Fables, Ancient and Modern, translated into Verse from Homer, Ovid, Boccaccio, and Chaucer; with Original Poems." The volume was published in March, 1700, not in 1699, as Johnson wrongly states.

l. 34, **hands of Mr. Tonson**. The contract is given on pp. 55, *seq.*, above. Jacob Tonson (1656-1736) the famous bookseller, was the founder of modern publishing; he issued works from the press of Otway, Dryden, Rowe, Addison, and Pope. Several members of the family became partners of "old Jacob," and he was eventually succeeded as head of the firm by a grand-

nephew, Jacob Tonson the third, of whom Johnson said that he was "a man who is to be praised as often as he is named" (Johnson's "Life of Milton," Bell's English Classics, p. 42), and whom—as it would seem—he speaks of (p. 55, above) as "the late amiable Mr. Tonson." He died in 1767.

p. 43, l. 3, **ode on St. Cecilia's Day.** See Globe, p. 373.

Johnson means the poem known as "Alexander's Feast, or the Power of Music. A Song in Honour of St. Cecilia's Day, 1697." It had been already published separately in folio in 1697, before its inclusion in the "Fables." Music was written for it by Jeremiah Clarke, one of the stewards of the festival performance. It was afterwards set by Clayton (see Johnson's "Life of Addison," Bell's English Classics, pp. 67, 68), and once more by Handel in 1736.

For many years the festival of St. Cecilia, the patron saint of musicians (November 22nd), was celebrated by a concert in Stationers' Hall, and a new ode, specially written and set to music for the occasion, was sung. This practice began in 1684, and a musical society was formed to carry out the plan. Dryden had already written one such ode for the festival of 1687 (see Globe, p. 369), which had been set to music by an Italian musician named Draghi.

l. 5, **Dr. Birch.** This was Thomas Birch, D.D. (1705-1766), a learned and accurate historical writer. He was a correspondent of Dr. Johnson, who reviewed his "History of the Royal Society" (1756-57) in the "Literary Magazine." See Boswell's "Johnson," Bohn, i. 116, 223. Johnson refers to him in his "Life of Milton," Bell's English Classics, pp. 19, 105.

Dr. Birch names as his informant, who had seen the letter, "the very learned and ingenious Richard Graham, Jun., Esq." See Malone's "Life of Dryden," p. 286.

Another story, of more doubtful character, mentioned by Warton in his "Essay on Pope" (ii. 20) on the authority of Bolingbroke, represents Dryden as writing the ode in a single night. Mr. Christie tries to reconcile the two accounts (Globe, p. lxxiii).

l. 7, **"Equivoque."** "Sur l'Equivoque," Boileau's twelfth satire, published in 1705.

l. 12, **into what hands, sc. Pope's.**

l. 15, **first of May, 1701.** The date was May 1st, 1700, not 1701. The London "Post-boy" announced on April 30th, that "John Dryden, Esq., the famous poet, lies a-dying."

l. 16, **as he tells us.** In a letter to Steward.

l. 17, **in Gerard-street.** Dryden lived at the "fifth door on the left hand coming from Newport Street in Soho." This house is now numbered 43. It is marked by a tablet with



Dryden's name. He used most commonly to write, so Pope told Spence, in the room on the ground floor, next the street (Spence's "Anecdotes," ed. 1858, p. 197).

Cunningham adds the following note on Dryden's dwelling-places. "From 1673 to 1682 he lived in the Parish of St. Bride's, Fleet Street, on the water-side of the street, in or near Salisbury Court (Rate-Books of St. Bride's, Fleet Street); and from 1682 to 1686 in a house on the north side of Long Acre, facing Rose Street, a narrow and circuitous (now a dirty) street, the scene of the barbarous assault upon him on the 1st December, 1679."

l. 17, **mortification in his leg.** He at first suffered from gout. Inflammation of one of his toes then took place. This was neglected, and mortification set in. Hobbs, a famous surgeon, several times urged amputation, but the poet refused to submit to it, and death soon followed. See Edward Ward, "London Spy" (1706).

l. 21, **Congreve's Life.** This was the life published by Curll in 1730, written probably by Oldmixon and Curll, though bearing the name of "Charles Wilson" as that of the author. The volume contains "Memoirs of Mr. Dryden and his family," communicated by Mrs. Thomas, a correspondent of Dryden whom he called Corinna, and in them this particular story occurs.

The story was transferred to the "Biographica Britannica," where Johnson saw it. Malone proved it to be false; and it is rejected by recent writers.

Sir John Hawkins in a note to this passage calls attention to the account of the funeral given by Edward Ward in the "London Spy" (1706). This is printed in Scott's "Dryden," xviii, 195, *seq.* A satirical poem in the British Museum, entitled, "A Description of Mr. D—n's Funeral" (1700), makes no mention of the alleged interruption.

l. 25, **Thomas Sprat.** See p. 126.

p. 44, l. 3, **lord Jefferies.** It is true that the second Lord Jeffreys (John, only son of the Chancellor), as well as Lord Halifax and Lord Dorset took a prominent part in procuring the honour of a public funeral for Dryden. But there seems to be no foundation for the charge of scandalous conduct made against him by Corinna.

p. 45, l. 21, **Dr. Garth.** Sir Samuel Garth (1660-1718), a famous physician and writer. He published his satirical poem, the "Dispensary," in 1699, and his topographical poem, "Claremont," in 1715, and did other literary work. He was a friend of Addison and Pope and their circle.

This part of Corinna's "wild story" is true. Garth actually attended the funeral of Dryden (which took place on May 13th, not "three weeks" after the decease of the poet), having pre-

viously delivered a Latin oration at the College of Physicians where the body had been lying in state for some days. The Register of the College contains the record of this, under the date May 3rd, 1700: "At the request of several persons of quality, that Mr. Dryden might be carried from the College of Physicians to be interred at Westminster it was unanimously granted by the President and Censors." The College was at that time in Warwick Lane, Newgate Street.

p. 46, l. 7, in a letter of Farquhar. George Farquhar (1678-1707), the dramatist, who wrote "The Inconstant" and "The Recruiting Officer," gave a satirical account of Dryden's funeral in a letter which has been many times reprinted (*e.g.* by Malone, Scott, and Mr. Christie). He does *not* speak of the funeral, however, as tumultuous, but as ridiculous. He says that "the pomp and ceremony was a kind of rhapsody, and fitter, I think, for Hudibras than him." Farquhar's account in no way corroborates that of Mrs. Thomas.

l. 22, among the poets. Dryden lies in Poets' Corner, close by Chaucer, Beaumont, and Cowley. Chaucer's grave was almost, if not actually, encroached on to make room for Dryden, who lies at his great master's feet.

l. 23, duke of Newcastle. This was Thomas Pelham, Duke of Newcastle. The dedication referred to is that which Congreve prefixed to the edition of Dryden's plays published in 1717. Johnson's loose use of pronouns has been referred to in the Introduction (see p. xxix).

l. 26, duke of Buckinghamshire. John Sheffield, formerly Earl of Mulgrave, Dryden's friend and patron. See p. 142. It is said that he was induced to move in the matter on account of the lines in Pope's epitaph on Rowe, as originally written:—

"Thy relics Rowe to this fair urn we trust,  
And sacred place by Dryden's awful dust:  
Beneath a rude and nameless stone he lies,  
To which thy tomb shall guide inquiring eyes."

See Johnson's "Life of Pope," Bell's English Classics, pp. 126, 213. (The epitaph on Rowe which actually appears in the Abbey has been considerably altered, and no allusion to Dryden occurs in it.)

Rowe at any rate died in 1718, and in 1720 the monument to Dryden—which is much more than "a tablet"—was placed, with a simple Latin inscription:

"J. Dryden  
Natus, 1632. Mortuus, Maii 1, 1700.  
Joannes Sheffield, Dux Buckinghamiensis, posuit.  
1720."

The bust on the monument was, in 1731, removed by Buckingham's widow, and a better one by Scheemakers substituted.

l. 29, **lady Elizabeth Howard**. She was married by licence at the church of St. Swithin, in Cannon Street (in the wall of which London Stone is enshrined), on December 1st, 1663. The register with the signatures still remains. The lady was at that time twenty-five years of age.

l. 31, **satire imputed to Lord Somers**. The title of the poem is "Dryden's Satire to his Muse." Probably Somers did not write it.

John, Lord Somers (1652-1716), a great Whig lawyer and statesman, who drew up the Declaration of Right, held various legal offices under William III. and in 1697 was made Lord Chancellor, with a peerage. From 1708 to 1710 he was Lord President. He is one of Macaulay's greatest heroes.

It may be fairly assumed that Lady Elizabeth Howard had an intrigue with the second Earl of Chesterfield before her marriage with Dryden. A letter from her to her lover, written in 1658, was printed in 1829. See Christie, *Globe*, p. xxiv.

The marriage seems not to have been a happy one. Dryden was unfaithful. His wife, a woman of violent temper, eventually became insane and died in 1714.

l. 32, **three sons**. Charles (1666-1704), John (1667-1701), and Erasmus Henry (1669-1710).

l. 33, **usher of the palace**. Malone showed that this was a mistake. Charles Dryden was chamberlain to Pope Innocent XII. Johnson was misled by Corinna's "Memoirs of Dryden," already mentioned.

p. 47, l. 2, **died at Rome**. He died at Rome in 1701. His comedy was produced in 1696, and his father furnished an epilogue while Congreve gave him a prologue. See *Globe*, p. 481.

l. 3, **entered some religious order**. The third son, Erasmus Henry, did not enter a religious order. He was a captain probably, in the Pope's guards, and remained at Rome until the death of his eldest brother (1704). After his return to England he succeeded to the family baronetcy, as the descendant of Sir Erasmus Dryden, the poet's grandfather (see p. 1). He died shortly afterwards (1710) at the family seat, Canons Ashby.

l. 10, **I know not any account**. A brief account is given in Spence's "Anecdotes" to which (in MS.) Johnson had access. "He (Dryden) was said to be a very good man by all who knew him; he was as plump as Mr. Pitt; of a fresh colour, and a down look, and not very conversable." This is given on the authority of Pope (edit. of 1858, p. 197). This account is confirmed by the contemptuous references in his contemporaries.

"Rochester christened him Poet Squab, and Tom Brown always called him 'little Bayes.' Shadwell, in his 'Medal of John Bayes,' sneers at him as a cherry-cheeked dunce; another lam-pooner calls him 'learned and florid'" (Christie, *Globe*, p. lxxxii). Further notices quoted by Mr. Christie allude to the unusual distance between his eyes which were "sleepy," and to the large mole on his right cheek. In his later life he had long grey hair.

There still remains a portrait of Dryden by Sir Godfrey Kneller, from which the usual engravings are taken. It was executed in 1698 for Jacob Tonson. Further portraits attributed to Kneller and others exist. See *Globe*, p. lxxxiii; and a full account in Malone, p. 432.

1. 11, **left by Congreve.** Preface to the collected plays of Dryden, published in 1717.

p. 48, l. 33, **accused of envy and insidiousness.** "Old Jacob Tonson" said of him that he was "very suspicious of rivals. He would compliment Crowne when a play of his failed, but was cold to him if he met with success" (Spence's "Aneodotes," ed. 1858, p. 34).

1. 34, **inciting Creech to translate Horace.** "On the authority of a pamphlet published by Tom Brown in 1690, 'The Reasons of Mr. Bayes' changing his Religion' (Part II., p. 53), and of some anonymous verses prefixed to the translation of Lucretius, and erroneously ascribed to Dryden. See Fenton's note to the poem to Creech, improperly included in Waller's Poems; and Malone's 'Life of Dryden,' p. 506" (Cunningham).

Thomas Creech (1659-1700), a clergyman, was the author of a translation of Lucretius (1682), and of Horace (1684). Creech dedicated the latter book to Dryden. Malone mentions a story, which is said to rest ultimately on the authority of Southerne, that Dryden *dissuaded* Creech from translating Horace, "as an attempt which his genius was not adapted to" (Malone, "Life of Dryden," p. 509). Creech committed suicide.

p. 49, l. 12, **He declares of himself.** "Defence of the Essay on Dramatic Poesy."

1. 16, **"Nor wine nor love."** Quoted from "Dryden's Satire to his Muse," attributed to Lord Somers.

1. 30, **flowed in upon him.** Preface to the "Fables," *Globe*, p. 495.

p. 50, l. 3, **by Carte.** "Life of James, Duke of Ormond," by Thomas Carte (1686-1754), the author of a history of England (1747-1755).

James Butler, first Duke of Ormond (died 1688), played an important part in Ireland during the Civil War, on the king's side, and on the Restoration was for many years Lord-

Lieutenant of Ireland. Dryden describes him as Barzillai in "Absalom and Achitophel." The "Fables" are dedicated to his grandson, the second duke.

l. 8, **Horace will support him.**

"Principibus placuisse viris non ultima laus est."

Epistol. I., xvii. 35.

p. 51, l. 4, **Afra Behn.** Afra (or Aphra) Behn (1640-1689), was the daughter of a barber. After a voyage to Surinam she married a Dutch merchant named Behn, and was left a widow at the age of twenty-five or twenty-six. She was the friend of the chief wits and courtiers of the time, and wrote many tales and plays. The chief of her tales is "Oroonoko" (1668), a sort of seventeenth century "Uncle Tom's Cabin," while the "Rover" and the "Roundheads" are her two best plays.

The address to Eleanor Gwyn, of which Johnson speaks, is prefixed to "The Feigned Courtesan" (1679).

p. 52, l. 16, **Collier, Blackmore, and Milbourne.** Jeremy Collier (1650-1726), the Nonjuring clergyman, who attacked the dramatists of his day, and especially Dryden, in his "Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage" (1698). See Macaulay's "Essay on the Comic Dramatists of the Restoration."

Sir Richard Blackmore (about 1650-1729), a fashionable Whig physician, who, when nearly fifty, appeared as a poet, and published "Prince Arthur" in 1695, and "King Arthur" in 1697. He was a favourite butt for the critics of his time, and, above all, for Pope and Pope's Tory friends. See Johnson's account of him, "Lives of the Poets," Bohn, ii. 223, *seq.*

On Milbourne, see p. 156 above.

For Dryden's references to Milbourne, Blackmore, and Collier, see Globe edition, pp. 505, 506.

l. 31, **a reflection on Collier.** The opening lines of "Cymon and Iphigenia," see Globe, p. 633.

p. 53, l. 6, **"Satire upon Wit."** This was published in 1709.

l. 13, **Congreve, Southern, manly Wycherley.** On Southern, see p. 144.

William Wycherley (1640-1715) wrote some of the best comedies of the Restoration period. Among his most successful works (all produced between 1671 and 1674) were "The Country Wife" and the "Plain Dealer." In the latter occurs the favourite character of "Manly," the rough brave honest sea captain, and hence comes Blackmore's epithet, "manly Wycherley."

l. 20, **abatement of the censure.** "The first edition of Blackmore's 'Satire' (that in folio, 1700) does not contain the softer couplet which Johnson says is in it, nor do I find the

couplet in question in Blackmore's reprint of the 'Satire' in his 'Collection of Poems,' printed in 1718 in 8vo" (Cunningham).

p. 54, l. 12, **Trapp**. "If Mr. Dryden took delight in abusing priests and religion, Virgil did not." Preface to the "Æneid" in Trapp's translation, ed. 1731, vol. i., p. lxxxvii (Mrs. Napier's note).

Joseph Trapp, D.D. (died 1747), a scholar and divine, whose translation of Virgil (1718) is spoken of by Dr. Johnson as "the clandestine refuge of schoolboys" (p. 96 above). He was the first Professor of Poetry at Oxford, and published "Praelectiones Poeticæ," as well as many theological works against Romanism and Methodism.

l. 13, "**holy butcher**." "Georgics," bk. iii.; Scott's "Dryden," xiv. 94.

l. 18, **imputed by Langbaine**. Langbaine's "Account of the English Dramatic Poets," ed. 1691, p. 171.

l. 19, **by Brown**. "But you I find still continue your old humour, which we are to date from the Hegira, the loss of Eton, or since orders were refused to you." Tom Brown, Preface to the second "Dialogue" (Cunningham's note).

l. 20, **he denies**, "Preface to the Fables," Globe, p. 506.

p. 55, l. 19, **office of Historiographer**. This office was not given by James II., but was granted to Dryden at the same time as the laureateship (1670), the same patent, in fact, gave him both offices. His predecessor as laureate was Davenant (died 1668), and as historiographer, James Howell, the author of "Epistolæ Hoelianæ" (died 1666).

A Historiographer Royal is said to have been first appointed by Henry VII.; the office was abolished in 1860. Its last holder was G. P. R. James, the historical novelist.

Dryden's official income under Charles II. and James II. seems to have consisted of his salary as laureate (£100 a year), his salary as historiographer (£100 a year), a pension of £100 a year granted him by way of addition, and his salary as Collector of the Customs of the Port of London, granted apparently in 1683, which last was only £5 a year as it would seem, but probably carried with it fees or perquisites. Besides this he had a small patrimony. Reckoned in modern money this income would have been worth, say, three times as much. For his plays Dryden seems to have got thirty or forty pounds a-piece.

His salary was often ill-paid, and Malone prints an affecting letter addressed by the poet to Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rochester, asking for payment of his salary and a new office. "Tis enough," he says finely, "for one age to have neglected Mr. Cowley and starved Mr. Butler." Rochester seems to have procured for him the small appointment in the Customs just mentioned.

l. 28, late amiable **Mr. Tonson**. See p. 157, above. Cunningham thinks, however, that this particular Mr. Tonson was not Jacob Tonson (died 1767), but another grand-nephew of the founder of the firm, called Richard Tonson, who had retired from business and died in 1772.

The agreement printed by Johnson is now in the British Museum.

p. 56, l. 31, **guineas**. So called because the first coins of this description, which were introduced in 1664, were coined from gold brought from the Guinea coast. They ceased to be coined in 1817. Until 1717 the value reckoned in sterling money varied. In that year a guinea was ordered by proclamation to exchange for twenty-one shillings.

p. 57, l. 4, **afterwards enlarged**. This was not the case. When the second edition of the "Fables" was printed Dryden was dead, and the payment made by Tonson to his administratrix raised the total payment in respect of the "Fables" to the sum agreed on, £300, in case a second edition was required.

l. 16, **Dr. King, of Oxford**. William King, D.D. (1685-1763), Principal of St. Mary Hall, Oxford. He was famous for his wit, and his Jacobitism; he wrote "Political and Literary Anecdotes" (1715-1760), published in 1818. When Johnson was given his M.A. degree by the University of Oxford, King brought him the diploma to London (Boswell, Bohn, i. 218).

The story about Dryden seems to have been told directly to Johnson by King.

l. 29, **Moyle**. Walter Moyle (1672-1721), the translator of Xenophon's "Economics," described by Dryden as "a most ingenious young gentleman, conversant in all the studies of humanity much above his years." The anecdote rests on the authority of Derrick, who says that Moyle "used to say" that Dryden received £40 for the use of the ode. But as Malone points out Derrick was not born when Moyle died. Malone could find no reference to the matter in Moyle's printed works.

p. 58, l. 5, **one told me**. This was Colley Cibber (1671-1757), the actor and dramatist.

He was the son of a well-known sculptor, Caius Gabriel Cibber, and became an actor in 1690. His first comedy was produced in 1696. In 1710 he became one of the managers of Drury Lane Theatre, and occupied this position till 1733. In 1730 he became poet laureate. His chief plays were the "Careless Husband" (1704), and the "Nonjuror" (1717). His "Apology" for his life was published in 1740. The quarrel between Cibber and Pope is described in Johnson's "Life of Pope." Compare Boswell's "Johnson," Bohn, iii. 113.

l. 7, **Will's Coffee-house**. This was in Bow Street, Covent

Garden, at the corner of Russell Street on the west side of Bow Street. "It was Dryden who made Will's Coffee-house the great resort for the wits of his time. After his death Addison transferred it to Button's, who had been a servant of his: they were opposite each other, in Russell Street, Covent Garden" (Pope, Spence's "Anecdotes," ed. 1858, p. 199).

The name "Will's" was taken from that of the proprietor, William Unwin.

l. 9, **the other**. This was Owen McSwinney (died 1754), formerly manager of Drury Lane Theatre, who bequeathed his fortune to Peg Woffington the actress. See Boswell's "Johnson," Bohn, iii. 113.

l. 18, **Appendix to the "Life of Congreve."** See p. 158, above.

l. 24, **"The utmost malice."** The quotation is from "Annus Mirabilis," stanzas 291, 292.

l. 25, **trines**. A trine is an astronomical term for the aspect of two planets when they are 120° distant from each other, that is, the third part of the circle of the zodiac. It was considered a favourable aspect by astrologers. Cf. "Paradise Lost," x. 657.

l. 26, **high-rai's'd Jove**. Jupiter was regarded as a benignant planet by astrologers.

l. 31, **justify his superstition**. See preface to the "Fables," Globe, p. 497.

The belief in astrology was almost universal in the second half of the seventeenth century. For an example of Dryden's belief in it, see his letter to his son Charles, printed by Johnson, p. 120, above.

p. 59, l. 12, **Webb and Puttenham**. William Webbe's "Discourse of English Poetry, together with the Author's Judgment touching the Reformation of our English Verse" (1586) and George Puttenham's "Art of English Poesy" (1589). Johnson might have mentioned George Gascoigne's "Certain Notes of Instruction concerning the Making of Verse or Rhyme in English" (1575) and Sir Philip Sidney's "Apology for Poetry" (1595) among his Elizabethan works.

l. 14, **"Essay on Dramatick Poetry."** See p. 6, above.

p. 60, l. 8, **dialogue on the Drama**. The "Essay on Dramatic Poesy" was in the form of a dialogue.

l. 19, **account of Shakespeare**. Scott's "Dryden," xv. 350; Univ. Tutorial Series edition, p. 53.

Dryden was generous and enthusiastic in his praise of Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare. He indignantly speaks of Ben Jonson's verses to the memory of Shakespeare as "an insolent, sparing, and invidious panegyric" ("Discourse on Satire").



l. 22, **Longinus**. Dionysius Cassius Longinus (died 273 A.D.) a Greek philosopher of the Platonic School, rhetorician and statesman. He was tutor and counsellor to Queen Zenobia at Palmyra, and advised her to rebel against the Romans. On the fall of Palmyra he was beheaded by the Emperor Aurelian. The only one of his works which has survived (and the authenticity even of this has been doubted) is a short treatise on the Sublime (*περί ὑψους*) which enjoyed a great reputation in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Compare Pope's "Essay on Criticism," 675, *seq.*

Johnson refers to a discussion by Longinus of a famous passage in an oration by Demosthenes, in which he suddenly swears by those who had fought at Marathon, instead of swearing by the gods, thus arousing the patriotism and martial instincts of his audience their descendants.

p. 61, l. 6, **Rymer**. See p. 128 above.

l. 7, **between two mathematicians**. As Mr. Milnes points out, "the dispute between two mathematicians is not the real original of the saying." Cicero had said, "*Errare mehercule malo cum Platone quam cum aliis recto sentire*" (*Tusc. Quæ.*, i. 17). It has often been imitated:

"Better to err with Pope than shine with Pye."

Byron, "English Bards."

By Scaliger is meant Joseph Scaliger (1540-1609), a very famous scholar, whose treatise "*De Emendatione Temporum*" (1583) is the most important book on the chronology of the ancients. Although deeply learned, Scaliger was not a great mathematician, and he rejected the reformed or Gregorian calendar, of which the mathematician Clavius (died 1612) was one of the authors, having been employed by the Pope, Gregory XIII.

p. 62, l. 4, **Trapp**. See pp. 54, 96.

The passage to which Trapp refers, occurs in Dryden's "Preface to the Fables," *Globe*, p. 505. Dryden speaks of Chaucer's Knight's Tale, as "the noble poem of 'Palamon and Arcite' which is of the epic kind, and perhaps not much inferior to the *Ilias* or the *Æneis*."

l. 16, **Spence**. Joseph Spence, died 1768, Professor of Modern History at Oxford, and Rector of Great Horwood, Buckinghamshire, the collector of the famous literary "Anecdotes," which were first published in 1820. His "Essay on Pope's *Odyssey*" was published in 1726; his "*Polymetis, an Enquiry concerning the Agreement between the Works of the Roman Poets and the Remains of the Ancient Artists*," in 1747. His MS. "Anecdotes" were lent by the Duke of Newcastle to Dr. Johnson, to

assist him in preparing his "Lives of the Poets." See Boswell, Bohn, iv. 25.

The reference is to Spence's "Essay on Pope's Odyssey," ed. 1727, pp. 121, 122.

l. 32, **His parallel.** Publius Ovidius Naso (43 B.C.-18 A.D.), the Latin poet.

Claudius Claudianus, the last great Latin poet, died about 405 A.D. He wrote "De Bello Getico," an epic poem, and a number of shorter works.

l. 34, **Sewel.** "Preface to Ovid's 'Metamorphoses'" (Dr. Johnson's note).

l. 34. **his comparison.** Statius (who lived in the first century, after Christ) was the author of the "Thebais," an epic poem on the expedition of the Seven against Thebes.

p. 63, l. 3. "**Quæ superimposito moles.**" The first line of the "Sylvæ" of Statius.

l. 6, **condemned him to straw,** judged him mad. Lunatics were, in Johnson's day, still kept locked up and chained, lying on beds of straw, like wild beasts. They were whipped, and in other ways brutally ill-treated. It was not till the beginning of the present century that a more humane treatment was instituted.

l. 10, **Gorboduc.** This play, also known as "Ferrex and Porrex," is the first printed English tragedy. It was issued in an unauthorized edition in 1565. The authors were Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst and Thomas Norton. It seems to have been acted about 1561.

Cunningham points out that Dryden in citing "Gorboduc" (which he does in the preface to the "Rival Ladies") makes a mistake in the sex of Gorboduc, whom he calls "Queen Gorboduc."

l. 10, **false account of Chapman's versification.** Preface to "Annus Mirabilis" (Globe, p. 39). He says Chapman's translation of Homer is written in lines of six feet, when he should have said seven.

George Chapman (died 1634) the dramatist and poet, published the first part of his translation of Homer in 1618.

l. 11, **discovers,** reveals.

l. 15, **literature,** scholarship.

l. 15, **Busby.** See above pp. 2, 124.

l. 29, **Latin tragedy of "Medea."** See Dryden's "Essay of Dramatic Poesy" (Univ. Tutorial Series edit., p. 30); Scott's "Dryden," xv. 321.

l. 32, **quoted by Quintilian.** Dryden and Johnson thought, rightly or wrongly, that the extant Latin play of "Medea" (really by Seneca) had been attributed to Ovid, and both argue

that it was not his. It is known that Ovid did write a tragedy on the subject of Medea. But only one or two lines of this remain.

"This sentence is far from clear, and it may, therefore, be well to recall the fact that one line (Quintilian, 'Inst. Or.' viii. c. 5) or perhaps two (Seneca, 'Suasor,' v. iii.) is all that remains to us of the lost tragedy of 'Medea,' by Ovid, which is mentioned with praise by Tacitus (?) 'Dialogus de Oratoribus,' c. 12, and again by Quintilian, 'Inst. Or.' x. i. 98. Seneca's 'Medea' is referred to by Quintilian, 'Inst. Or.' ix. ii. 8" (Mrs. Napier's note).

l. 32, **Quintilian** (second half of first century after Christ), a great Latin critic. His "Institutiones Oratoriæ" is a system of rhetoric in twelve books.

l. 33, **Seneca** (died 65 A.D.), a Latin philosopher and tragic writer, who was the tutor and counsellor of Nero during the earlier part of his reign.

p. 65, l. 5, **Charles**, sc., Charles II. The lines quoted are from the "Threnodia Augustalis," a poem on the death of Charles II. (Globe, p. 213).

p. 66, l. 15, **accidental**. An accident, in logic, means an attribute which is not implied by the use of the term, and does not belong to the essence of a thing, and which cannot be inferred from it.

l. 19, **tuned the numbers**, showed how to write melodious verse.

Johnson perhaps overrates the claim of Dryden. Mr. Gosse has given reasons for assigning the honour to Waller. See his "Eighteenth Century Literature," p. 3, and in more detail his "Shakespeare to Pope."

l. 23, **Waller and Denham**. Dryden himself says that "The excellence and dignity of rhyme was never fully known till Mr. Waller taught it; but this sweetness of his lyric poesy was afterwards followed in the epic by Sir John Denham in his 'Cooper's Hill'" (dedication of the "Rival Ladies"). Compare also the preface to the "Fables" (Globe, p. 500): "Our numbers were in their nonage till these last [Waller and Denham] appeared."

p. 67, l. 4, **rectitude**. Usually employed in reference to moral quality only.

l. 32, **poetical translations**. Even at the present time the French have few good translations into verse of the classical and foreign poets. On the other hand their prose translations are admirable.

Compare Johnson's "Life of Pope," Bell's English Classics, p. 107.

p. 68, l. 1, **to copy Horace**. Ben Jonson translated Horace's "De Arte Poetica" and a few odes with great fidelity. See Gifford's edition of Ben Jonson (ed. 1879), pp. 728 *seq.*

l. 1, **Feltham**. Owen Feltham (died 1678). See p. 32, above.

l. 4, **Sandys**. See pp. 32 and 149. Dryden calls him "the best versifier of the former age" in the preface to the "Fables" (Globe, p. 494).

l. 7, **Holyday**. See pp. 32 and 149.

l. 22, **divaricate**, branch off, divide.

l. 25, **says Dryden**. Preface to Ovid's "Epistles" (Scott's "Dryden," xii.).

p. 69, l. 6, **Sir Edward Sherburne**. Sir Edward Sherburne (1618-1702), who translated Seneca's "Medea," "Phædra," and "Troades," and did other literary work long since forgotten. His "Brief Discourse concerning Translation" occurs at the end of the Life of Seneca, prefixed to the tragedies, p. xxxvi (ed. 1702).

l. 10, **authority of Horace**. "De Arte Poetica," pp. 132, *seq.*

l. 28, **by his Sebastian**. Dryden's "Don Sebastian," Act iv., sc. 3.

l. 33, **occasional**. Written for some special occasion. Compare with this passage what Johnson says in his "Life of Pope," Bell's English Classics, p. 93.

p. 70, l. 10, **Virgil is related**. Johnson relates the same thing in his "Life of Pope." See my edition, Bell's English Classics, p. 93.

l. 30, **attended**, waited for.

p. 71, l. 5, **heroick stanzas**. "Heroic stanzas consecrated to the Memory of His Highness, Oliver, late Lord Protector." See p. 2.

l. 11, **Gondibert**. See pp. 6, 128.

l. 15, **Donne's**. John Donne (1573-1631), scholar and courtier, who died Dean of St. Paul's. He wrote several satires and other poems, collected after his death (1633).

l. 17, **forced conceits**. A "conceit" means an extravagant, and far-fetched idea. The word originally signified merely a concept, or idea; but is employed in a special sense on account of the Italian usage.

On the poetry of "conceits" as practised by those whom Dr. Johnson, apparently following a suggestion of Dryden himself (though this has been, I think, generally overlooked), calls the Metaphysical School, see his "Life of Cowley." "Lives of the Poets," Bohn, i. 22, *seq.*

l. 17, **verses on the Restoration**. "Astræa Redux." See p. 3.

l. 19, "**He, toss'd by Fate.**" "*Astræa Redux*," vv. 51, *seq* (Globe, p. 16).

l. 24, "**Well might.**" *Ib.*, vv. 93, *seq*.

l. 31, "**'Twas Monk.**" *Ib.*, vv. 151, *seq*.

p. 72, l. 13, "**spirits to dispense.**" The "animal spirits" played a great part in seventeenth century physiology. They were conceived as a very subtle fluid which was secreted or distilled by the brain from the blood, and which flowed through the nerves, and thus enabled them to perform the work of sensation and movement.

l. 22, **humours**, the liquids contained in the animal body. On the term humour, see the note in Johnson's "Life of Pope," Bell's English Classics, pp. 183, 184.

l. 28, "**With Alga.**" "*Astræa Redux*," vv. 119, *seq*. The altars of the sea-gods were, it seems, sometimes strewn with offerings of seaweed. I know of no classical authority, however.

l. 30, **Portunus**, or Portumnus, the Roman god of harbours, who was invoked to grant a happy voyage. Dryden again alludes to him in the "Fables," dedication of the "Palamon and Arcite," 48.

l. 33, "**Prayer storm'd the skies.**" Slightly compressed from "*Astræa Redux*," vv. 143, *seq*. Compare St. Matthew, xi. 12. The scriptural reference to which Johnson alludes a line or two lower down is as follows:

"The attempt was fair, but Heaven's prefixed hour  
Not come." ("*Astræa*," 147, 148).

Compare St. John, ii. 4.

p. 73, l. 3, "**For by example.**" "*Astræa*," 207, 208.

l. 8, "**The winds.**" *Ib.*, 242, *seq*.

l. 12, "**It is no longer.**" *Ib.*, 252, *seq*.

l. 17, **Malherbe**. François de Malherbe (1555-1628), a voluminous writer who did much to set the fashion of frigid refinement and reserve in French poetry of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. He was a warm advocate for a poetical diction. "Polished and elegant, his lines seldom pass the conventional tone of poetry; and while he is never original, he is rarely impressive" (Hallam, "Literature of Europe," iii. 243).

l. 21, on the "**Coronation.**" "To His Sacred Majesty, a Panegyric on His Coronation." See p. 3, above (Globe, p. 24).

l. 23, "**You have already.**" *Ib.*, p. 79, *seq*.

l. 31, "**Nor is it duty.**" *Ib.*, pp. 69, 70.

l. 32, **fruition**. The old pronunciation, which lasted till the end of the seventeenth century, made this a four-syllable word. In Shakespeare and all his contemporaries the "-tion" termination was dissyllabic; it was reserved for a later age to corrupt

this into the slovenly and hideous “-shun” of to-day. Sir Philip Sidney expressly refers to “motion” and “potion” as three-syllable words. Compare his “Apology for Poetry” (Arber), p. 71. Dr. Johnson is mistaken in thinking that Dryden only used this pronunciation on this one occasion. Compare the couplet actually quoted (p. 2, above) by Johnson himself:

“No comet need foretell his change drew on,  
Whose corpse might seem a constellation.”  
 (“Elegy on Lord Hastings,” pp. 65, 66.)

And this :

“This with the dawn of morning shall be done ;  
You haste too much her execution.”  
 (“Conquest of Granada,” Part II., Act iv., sc. 3.)

There are many other examples.

l. 33, **verses to the lord chancellor**. “To My Lord Chancellor, presented on New Year’s Day, 1662” (Globe, p. 28).

p. 74, l. 17, **an emptiness**, a vacuum ; which, according to the science of the seventeenth century, Nature abhors.

p. 75, l. 1, **rowl**. An old and bad spelling of *roll*, which comes from the old French *roler*, and thus from Latin *rotula*, the diminutive of *rota*, a wheel.

l. 33, “**Annus Mirabilis**.” See p. 5 (Globe, p. 37, *seq.*).

p. 76, l. 7, **Boileau was the first**. On Boileau, see 155.

Mr. Milnes corrects Johnson on this point, and refers to Ronsard (1524-1585), “Œuvres,” vi. 40 (ed. 1876):

“Ils ont cherché  
Le soufre qui nature aux yeux avoit caché.”

l. 11, **had described a sea-fight**. Johnson doubtless refers to Waller’s poem entitled “Of a War with Spain and a Fight at Sea,” written about 1655. See also Waller’s “Instructions to a Painter for the Drawing of the Posture and Progress of His Majesty’s Forces at Sea, under the Command of his Highness-Royal : together with the Battle and Victory obtained over the Dutch, June 3rd, 1665.” This last, however, cannot long have preceded Dryden’s “Annus Mirabilis.”

l. 11, **Milton had not yet**. See Milton’s “Paradise Lost,” bk. vi., 469, *seq.*

l. 19, **sentiment**, reflection, judgment.

l. 22, **too much resemblance**. For comparison with the first stanzas of “Annus Mirabilis” I quote the opening lines of Waller’s poem :

"Now for some ages had the pride of Spain  
 Made the sun shine on half the world in vain;  
 While she bid war to all that durst supply  
 The place of those her cruelty made die.  
 Of Nature's bounty men forebore to taste,  
 And the best portion of the earth lay waste."

l. 26, **poem on the civil war of Rome.** The fragment usually called "Specimen Belli Civilis," and attributed (without evidence) to Petronius Arbiter. It is often printed as an appendix to Lucan's "Pharsalia." It begins with the line quoted by Johnson:

"Orbem jam totum victor Romanus habebat."

Dryden himself gives Johnson the hint of some slight indebtedness to Lucan. See *Globe*, p. 39.

l. 29, "**It seems.**" "*Annus Mirabilis*," stanza 15.

p. 77, l. 2, **indecently**, unbecomingly.

l. 9, **attempt at Bergen.** This was an attempt made by the English fleet under Lord Sandwich to capture two Dutch merchant fleets from the East, in the harbour of Bergen in Norway, which then belonged to the Kingdom of Denmark, a neutral power. This attack was unsuccessful.

l. 11, "**And now approach'd.**" "*Annus Mirabilis*," stanzas 24, *seq.*

l. 15, **castors**, beavers. These were hunted not only for their fur, but also for a strong-scented substance contained in certain glands of the male, which was used in medicine (*castoreum*). Various absurd stories were told of the way in which the castors, "conscious of their store," attempted to escape with their lives.

p. 78, l. 18. "**The night comes on.**" *Ib.*, stanzas 68, *seq.*

p. 79, l. 1, **arts not liberal.** The "liberal arts" in the mediæval universities were seven in number. Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric (these three were called the *trivium*), Music, Arithmetic, Geometry, and Astronomy (the *quadrivium*). These were the "Arts" in which degrees were conferred by the universities, as distinguished from Theology, Medicine, and Law. They were "noble and genteel" as Bailey says, and were opposed to the mechanic arts "which require labour of hand and body, rather than of the mind."

Addison in one of his papers in the "Spectator" (No. 297) makes the same charge of using technical language against Milton as well as Dryden. Compare my Introduction, p. xxiv, above, where it is pointed out that a special vividness arises from this use of specific and definite technical terms.

l. 5, **says he**. Dryden's "Account of the ensuing Poem in a letter to the Honourable Sir Robert Howard," prefixed to the "Annus Mirabilis" (Globe, p. 39).

l. 13, "**So here some pick.**" "Annus Mirabilis," stanza 146, *seq.*

l. 14, **okum, oakum**. Oakum is tow, made by untwisting and combing out old ropes. The word comes from A.S. *ácumba*, the *á* of which is changed to *oa* (compare *oak* from *ác*), meaning that which is combed out, tow.

l. 15, **calking-iron**. To calk, or caulk, is to drive oakum and small wooden wedges into the seams, to keep out the water.

l. 21, **dawby marling**. Marling, or marline, is a small line of untwisted hemp, daubed with tar, which is bound round the ends of ropes to prevent them from fraying or ravelling.

l. 22, **sear-cloth**. Used as a verb here, to cover with sear-cloth or cerecloth. Cerecloth was cloth coated with wax, used to cover dead bodies and for other purposes.

l. 22, **tarpawling**. Tarpauling is canvas heavily coated with tar. "A *palling* is a covering, from the verb *pall*, to cover" (Skeat). *Pall* itself, though an A.S. word, eventually comes from Latin, *palla* or *pallium*. See Skeat, "Principles of English Etymology," first series, p. 437. Our nickname for a sailor is the shortened form of "tarpauling."

l. 29, **the Royal Society**. The "Royal Society of London for the Promotion of Natural Knowledge," originated in the meetings of several learned men, such as Dr. Wilkins (afterwards Bishop of Chester), and Dr. Wallis (the mathematician and opponent of Hobbes) during the Rebellion. On the Restoration the society was formally organized, and obtained a charter in 1662. Dryden was elected a member in the latter year, and amongst other early members were Pepys and Evelyn.

l. 34, "**Instructed ships.**" "Annus Mirabilis," stanza 163.

l. 34, **commerce**. The accent was invariably on the second syllable. Compare stanza 158 for another instance.

p. 80, l. 18, "**The diligence of trades.**" "Annus Mirabilis," stanza 216.

l. 23, **taken from Seneca**. "Dr. Johnson is much at fault in this statement. The line which he says is taken from Seneca [Dr. Johnson, by the way, does not say that the line, "Omnia noctis erant," etc., is taken from Seneca] is one of two lines of Varro, a fragment of the 'Argonautica,' quoted as excellent in the 'Controversies' of the elder Seneca (iii. 16)

'Desierant latrare canes urbesque silebant,  
Omnia noctis erant placida composita quiete.'

And it is there observed that Virgil in imitating them in two



lines of the 'Æneid' (viii. 26) had improved on the excellent original. In the same passage of Seneca, Ovid is said to have been in the habit of saying of Varro's lines, that they would have been much improved if the last part of the second line had been away, and they had ended with *omnia noctis erant*. Dryden probably imitated these words of Varro" (note in the Globe edition, p. 74).

l. 29, "**The ghosts of traytors.**" "Annus Mirabilis," stanza 223.

"The bridge" is of course London Bridge, on the gate-houses of which the heads of those executed for treason were exhibited.

l. 32, **sabbath notes.** The hymns of witches sung at their sabbath meetings, when it was believed that they indulged in hideous parodies of divine service, in the presence of evil spirits.

p. 81, l. 3, **concludes with a simile.** The last stanza (304) runs :

"Thus to the Eastern wealth through storms we go,  
But now, the Cape once doubled, fear no more;  
A constant trade wind will securely blow,  
And gently lay us on the spicy shore."

The comparison is between the course of the war and a voyage eastward. The dangers are, says Dryden, all over. But next year (1667) the Dutch sailed up the Thames to the mouth of the Medway.

l. 13, **Harte.** Dr. Walter Harte (died 1774), canon of Windsor, who was tutor to Philip Stanhope, the natural son of Lord Chesterfield, and author of "The History of Gustavus Adolphus" (1759), and various essays and poems. Dr. Johnson knew him, and regarded him as "a man of the most companionable talents he had ever known" (Boswell's "Johnson," Bohn, ii. 120). He was a friend of Pope and Swift.

l. 15, "**Aureng Zeb.**" See pp. 24, 141. The date was 1675.

l. 24, **description of night.** "Indian Emperor," Act iii., sc. 2.

l. 35, **English Epistles of Ovid.** See pp. 32, 148.

p. 82, l. 2, **Earl of Mulgrave.** See p. 142, above.

l. 3, "**Absalom and Achitophel.**" See pp. 32, 149.

l. 34, "**Henceforth a series.**" "Absalom and Achitophel." Part. I., v. 1028.

p. 83, l. 4, **written by Tate.** Nahum Tate (1652-1715), who wrote, with Dr. Brady, a metrical paraphrase of the Psalms (1696). See p. 180. The second part of "Absalom" contains a passage of two hundred lines by Dryden (310-509).

l. 9, **The "Medal."** See pp. 33, 150.

l. 22, "**Power was his aim.**" "The Medal," vv. 50, *seq.*

l. 30, **a grudging**, a grumbling desire.

l. 32, **gears**, apparel or harness.

l. 34, **white witches**. Witches who do no harm, but use magic to cure diseases and confer other benefits. They were "mischievously good," that is, did good by evil means.

l. 35, "**Threnodia.**" "Threnodia Augustalis, a Funeral Pindaric Poem. To the Happy Memory of King Charles II." Johnson's complaint as to the use of the term "Augustalis" does not seem very well founded.

p. 84, l. 7, **petrified with grief**. "Threnodia Augustalis," v. 8.

"Like Niobe we marble grow  
And petrify with grief."

l. 11, "**The sons of art.**" *Ib.*, vv. 160, *seq.* The remedies applied by the "sons of art" were unpleasant enough, but hardly noble. "Several of the prescriptions have been preserved. One of them is signed by fourteen doctors. The patient was bled largely. Hot iron was applied to his head. A loathsome volatile salt, extracted from human skulls, was forced into his mouth" (Macaulay, "History," Student's edition, i. 211).

l. 20, "**With him th' innumerable.**" *Ib.*, vv. 97, *seq.* Dr. Johnson has not printed the first line as it was written. Dryden divided it into two, after the word "crowd."

l. 34, **on the death of Mrs. Killigrew**. See *Globe*, pp. 338, *seq.*

Johnson was an inadequate judge of lyrical poetry; he had not the emotional capacity which is required. Hence his criticisms of Milton and Gray are the most unsatisfactory of all. When he calls Dryden's "Ode on the Death of Mrs. Killigrew" the "noblest ode that our language ever has produced," he does injustice to the "Epithalamium" of Spenser, the "Nativity Ode" of Milton, and the great odes of Gray and Collins, to mention no others. A well-known living critic, however, confirms Johnson's extravagant praise in terms more extravagant still. "Johnson pronounced it the noblest in the language, and in his time it certainly was, unless 'Lycidas' be called an ode. Since its time there has been Wordsworth's great immortality ode, and certain beautiful but fragmentary pieces of Shelley which might be so classed; but till our own days [why the limitation?] nothing else which can match this. The first stanzas may be pronounced absolutely faultless and incapable of improvement. As a piece of concerted music in verse it has not a superior" (Saintsbury, "Dryden," p. 94, *seq.*).

It should be noticed that a few pages later Johnson qualifies his praise by saying that "Alexander's Feast" is "perhaps superior as a whole" (p. 98).

Mrs. Killigrew was the daughter of a dignified clergyman, Dr. Henry Killigrew, the Master of the Savoy, and the niece of Thomas Killigrew and Sir William Killigrew, the dramatists.

She was unmarried—for the title Mrs. was given to unmarried ladies until the middle of the eighteenth century, Miss being usually reserved for little girls—and was maid of honour to the Duchess of York. She died of small-pox in 1685. Her poems were collected and published in 1686, with Dryden's elegy prefixed.

p. 85, l. 1, **Fervet immensusque ruit.** Horace, "Odes," IV ii. 7. Said of Pindar.

l. 5, **first ode for Cecilia's day.** Globe, p. 369. See p. 157, above.

l. 8, **diapason.** Used by Dryden in the oldest sense, that of the Greeks, who employed it to signify an octave, a complete series of tones. The word is used in two or three different meanings by modern musicians. The diapasons of an organ are the chief stops, which extend over the whole compass of the key-board. In France the term is used as equivalent to pitch, and also for a tuning-fork.

p. 86, l. 1, "**Eleonora.**" "Eleonora; a Panegyric Poem. Dedicated to the Memory of the late Countess of Abingdon." The lady was the daughter of Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley; she died in 1691, in her thirty-third year. Dryden wrote the poem for a money reward; and, as he frankly says in the prefatory address to the Earl of Abingdon, he had never even seen the subject of his elegy.

p. 87, l. 3, **confesses that he did not know.** Globe, p. 348.

l. 9, "**Religio Laici.**" "Religio Laici; or a Layman's Faith. A Poem." Published in 1682. This is a defence of the position of the Church of England in reference to what is called the "rule of faith." It contains an interesting discussion, from the conservative point of view, of the "History of the Old Testament," by Père Simon, the founder of Biblical criticism. The poet sums up his own position in this way: Follow the early fathers *and* the Scripture; if they disagree, the point is probably of small consequence. As to the relation of private judgment and the authority of the Church, he says:

"And after hearing what our Church can say,  
If still our reason runs another way,  
That private reason 'tis more just to curb  
Than by disputes the public peace disturb.  
For points obscure are of small use to learn,  
But common quiet is mankind's concern."

The poem is preceded by a prose preface, in which he defends his objection to putting the Bible without safeguards into the hands of the unlearned, and his dislike to the Athanasian creed. There is a certain ironical tone throughout, at once conservative and sceptical.

l. 10, **Browne.** Sir Thomas Browne (1605-1682), a physician of Norwich, and antiquary. Besides "*Religio Medici*" (1642), he wrote "*Pseudodoxia Epidemica*, or Enquiries into Vulgar Errors" (1646), "*Hydriotaphia*, or Urn-Burial" (1658), and other works.

l. 28, "**Hind and Panther.**" See pp. 37, *seq.*, and 153.

p. 88, l. 8. **Nicene Fathers.** The bishops who met at the Council of Nicæa in Bithynia (325) and drew up the chief and most authoritative declaration of faith of the undivided Catholic Church—called the Nicene Creed.

l. 10, "**City Mouse and Country Mouse.**" See pp. 38 and 153.

l. 17, **bribed by the subject.** Pope was a Roman Catholic, and therefore might naturally be biassed in favour of this apologetic poem.

l. 24, **confines the sense to couplets.** Chaucer, who first introduced the heroic couplet into English literature, constantly carries the sense beyond the couplet; and often ends a sentence with the first line of a couplet to begin a new sentence with the second—a practice imitated by some modern poets, for instance, Keats and Mr. William Morris. This *enjambement*, or interlinking of couplets, so that the sense runs on from one couplet to another, was given up during the latter half of the seventeenth, and beginning of the eighteenth century. Pope carefully avoided it, and after his time it was so unusual that Dr. Johnson here calls special attention to its use, and seems quite surprised at its agreeable effect, "rather increase of pleasure by variety, than offence by ruggedness" (p. 89).

p. 89, l. 4, **he says.** The prefatory account "To the Reader," prefixed to the "*Hind and Panther*" (Globe, p. 223).

l. 10, "**More haughty than the rest.**" "*Hind and Panther*," Part I., 160, *seq.* (Globe, p. 227).

"The close-cropped hair of the Presbyterian and a black skull-cap made his ears prominent. The 'ragged tail betwixt his legs' was his Geneva cloak" (Christie, in Globe edition). The Calvinists or Presbyterians taught the doctrine that apart from the merit or demerit, rightness or wrongness, of men's actions they are eternally predestinated to eternal happiness or eternal pain. Hence the epithet "predestinating."

l. 19, "**These are the chief.**" *Ib.*, vv. 308, *seq.*

l. 23, "**sun-begotten tribe.**" Until the eighteenth century

it was commonly believed that many of the lowest forms of animal life were directly engendered by the heat of the sun from slime and mud.

l. 24, **conventicle**. Dryden and his contemporaries seem always to accent this word on the penultimate, *conventicle*. See Globe, pp. 134, 464, and compare

“He used to lay about and stickle  
Like ram or bull at conventicle.”

l. 32, **shards**. A “shard” usually means a broken piece of earthenware. The word “sherd,” or “shard” is the past participle of A.S. *sceran*, to shear, what is cut off or broken off. “Shard,” however, in some dialects means dung; and this is the sense in which Dryden seems to use the word here. “Such souls as shards produce, such beetle things,” means such forms of life, like beetles, as are generated in dung. Some editors of Shakespeare read, “shard-born beetle” in *Macbeth*, Act iii., sc. 2., l. 42, instead of “shard-borne;” but this say the Cambridge editors (Messrs. Clark and Wright) “is unquestionably wrong.”

p. 90, l. 4, “**For when the herd.**” “Hind and Panther,” Part I., vv. 554 to the end.

l. 13, “**in the plot.**” The Popish plot; the sham plot invented by Titus Oates, and the persecution of the Papists which followed it.

l. 22, **muff**. Here simply fur. The word originally meant a large sleeve, then a fur cover for the hands. The “lady of the spotted muff” is the panther.

p. 91, l. 11, “**Birth of the Prince of Wales.**” “*Britannia Rediviva*; a Poem on the Prince born on the Tenth of June, 1688.” The ultra-Protestant party, without an atom of evidence, affirmed that the child, whose arrival was a source of inconvenience to them, was not the real offspring of the Queen, but had been smuggled into her chamber and passed off as hers.

l. 18, **Stapylton**. Sir Robert Stapylton (died 1669), the author of several plays, and of translations of Juvenal, Musæus, and Strada. His translation of Juvenal was published in 1660 with the title “*Mores Hominum*. The Manners of Men, described in Sixteen Satires by Juvenal. In English Verse with a large Comment, by Sir Robert Stapylton, Knight.”

l. 19, **Holiday**. One Barten Holiday, see pp. 68, 149.

His translation of Juvenal (1673) is very literal. “If rendering the exact sense of these authors, almost line for line, had been our business, Barten Holyday had done it already to our hands: and by the help of his learned notes and illustrations,

not only Juvenal and Persius, but what is yet more obscure, his own verses might be understood. Thus Holyday seized the meaning of Juvenal, but the poetry has always escaped him" (Dryden, "Discourse on Satire" prefixed to the translation of Juvenal).

l. 21, **new version.** On Dryden's version, see pp. 41 and 155.

l. 32, **Creech.** See pp. 48 and 161.

p. 92, l. 15, **translation of Virgil.** See above, p. 42.

l. 17, the "**Pollio.**" This is the fourth eclogue of Virgil, addressed to M. Asinius Pollio, consul in the year in which it was written (40 B.C.). Dryden's version was published in Tonson's first "Miscellany" (1684).

l. 17, **Nisus and Euryalus.** The episode of Nisus and Euryalus occurs in "Æneid," Bk. IX. The episode of Mezentius and Lausus occurs in Bk. X. The two fragments were published in Tonson's second "Miscellany" (1685) together with the speech of Venus to Vulcan from Bk. VIII.

l. 25, **elocution,** eloquence, graceful utterance.

p. 93, l. 4, **arguments,** outlines of the contents, prefixed to the books.

l. 5, **Addison.** Addison addressed some verses to Dryden in 1693, and seems to have soon gained the friendship of the great poet. On his assistance to Dryden, see the postscript to the translation of Virgil.

John Dennis, Pope's old enemy, suggests that Addison had a bad effect on Dryden. "Dryden was generally an extreme sober man. For the last ten years of his life he was much acquainted with Addison, and drank with him more than ever he used to do; probably so far as to haste his end" (Spence, "Anecdotes," ed. 1858, p. 34). On Addison's fondness for drink, see Johnson's "Life of Addison," Bell's English Classics, p. 99.

l. 7, **says Pope.** Preface to the "Iliad."

l. 11, **Milbourne.** See pp. 42 and 156.

p. 94, l. 4, "**And when to geld the lambs.**" This line is a satirical addition by the Reverend Luke Milbourne.

l. 5, "**cura boum.**" The passages of Latin are of course quoted from Virgil, "Georgics," Bk. I.

l. 11, **Mr. Ogilby.** John Ogilby (1600-1676), a Scotchman of adventurous and varied fortunes, was apprenticed to a dancing master in London, but went to Ireland, and started a theatre in Dublin. While in Ireland he translated "Æsop's Fables." He then came to Cambridge, and there translated Virgil (1649). When over fifty years old he learnt Greek and translated Homer (1660-1665). His maps and his admirable "Book of Roads"

were very famous. See Johnson's "Life of Pope," Bell's English Classics, pp. 2, 22, 138.

l. 25, **impertinent**, irrelevant, out of place. Virgil had only mentioned the plough. His words are,

"oleæque Minerva  
Inventrix, unciue puer monstrator aratri."

(I., 18, 19).

The "puer" was Triptolemus, who (it is said) first invented the plough.

l. 27, **sculpture**, engraving.

l. 29, **cypress** means (1) a kind of tree; (2) thin lawn. Cypress, a tree, comes from *Cupressus* (*κυπάρισσος*), and has nothing to do with the island of Cyprus. Cypress, an obsolete word for thin lawn, is not the same word, and its origin is, according to Skeat, not definitely known.

p. 95, l. 23, **affects**, has an affection for.

l. 24, **Ascalaphus**. According to the story, it was Ascalaphus who gave the information that Proserpine had eaten part of a pomegranate while in Hades, and thus rendered her return to earth impossible. For this he was punished by Ceres and Proserpine, the latter of whom changed him into an owl.

l. 25, **mus'd**. To be in a state of silent stupefaction. This passive transitive sense is very unusual.

l. 31, **Vicars**. John Vicars (died 1652), a fanatical and foul-mouthed pamphleteer on the Presbyterian side, who attacked with equal energy Anglicans, Romanists, and Independents. Many of his tracts have ludicrous titles, such as "Babel's Balm, or the Honeycomb of Rome's Religion" (1624); "A Looking Glass for Malignants, or God's Hand against God-haters" (1643). His doggerel version of the "Æneid" was published in 1632.

p. 96, l. 9, **admiration**, wonder.

l. 10, **licentious**, too free.

l. 11, **Dr. Brady**. Nicholas Brady (died 1726), clergyman, who produced with Nahum Tate (see pp. 83, 174) the metrical version of the Psalms known as "Tate and Brady" (1696). His translation of the "Æneid" was published in 1716-1726.

l. 18, **Trapp**. See pp. 54, 62, 163.

Trapp's tragedy, entitled, "Abra-mule, or Love and Empire," was published in 1703.

p. 97, l. 16, **Ariosto**. Ludovico Ariosto (1474-1533). Above sixty editions of his "Orlando Furioso" (1516) were published in the sixteenth century. He had "no rival in general popularity." In fact Hallam goes so far as to say that "Ariosto has been, after Homer, the favourite poet of Europe" ("Literature of Europe," i. 309).

l. 19, "**Fables.**" See pp. 42, 156.

l. 22, **Boiardo.** Matteo Maria Boiardo, Count of Scandiano (1434-1494), a statesman and courtier, connected with the duchy of Ferrara. He wrote the "*Orlando Innamorato*" (1486), to which Ariosto's "*Orlando Furioso*" may be regarded as a sequel.

l. 23, **Domenichi and Berni.** Luigi Domenichi (died 1565), an Italian writer now almost forgotten, who translated several Greek and Latin classics. In 1545 he published "*L'Orlando Innamorato riformato*," to which Johnson alludes.

Francesco Berni (died 1536) whose "improved edition or re-making (*rifaccimento*)" of Boiardo's poem was issued in 1541, since when the original has "never been reprinted," says Hallam, and "rarely sought or quoted, even in Italy" ("*Literature of Europe*," i. 229, 230). Berni's "*rifaccimento*" gives the "sense of almost every stanza of the original."

l. 26, **tale of the Cock.** "The Cock and the Fox, or the Tale of the Nun's Priest" (Globe, p. 564).

Mr. Pollard, the well-known authority on Chaucer, describes it as "one of the best of all the tales," and this seems to be the general opinion of scholars. Dr. Johnson's canons of art made him as insensible to the quaint humour of this tale as he was to the chivalry and magnificence of the Knight's Tale.

The plot is taken by Chaucer from a fable of about forty lines in the "*Lais*" of Marie of France.

l. 27, "**Palamon and Arcite.**" Chaucer's Knight's Tale (Globe, p. 512). "I prefer in our countryman [Chaucer] far above all his other stories, the noble poem of 'Palamon and Arcite,' which is of the epic kind, and perhaps not much inferior to the *Ilias* or the *Æneis*" (Dryden's preface to the "*Fables*," Globe, p. 505). It is founded on Boccaccio's "*Teseide*."

l. 33, **Boccace.** Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375), the great Florentine poet and tale writer. His "*Decamerone*" was completed in 1358.

l. 33, "**Sigismunda.**" "*Sigismunda and Guiscardo*" (Globe, p. 608, *seq.*).

l. 35, "**Theodore and Honoria.**" (Globe, p. 624.)

p. 98, l. 2, "**Cymon.**" "*Cymon and Iphigenia*" (Globe, p. 633).

l. 5, **one of the Beroalds.** "The Beroalds, uncle and nephew, were two of the distinguished scholars of the sixteenth century. Filippo Beroaldo, the elder (1453-1505), was born at Bologna, displayed extraordinary abilities in his youth, and opened a school at the age of nineteen. He lectured for some months in Paris, and on his return to Bologna was made professor of *belles*



*lettres* there. He it is to whom Johnson refers" (Mr. Milnes' note).

l. 13, "**Ode for St. Cecilia's Day.**" "Alexander's Feast; or the Power of Music. A song in Honour of St. Cecilia's Day, 1697" (Globe, p. 373). See p. 157, above.

l. 22, **a fortnight's labour.** See p. 43, above.

p. 99, l. 17, "**Love various minds.**" "Tyrannic Love," Act ii., sc. 1 (with a slight verbal alteration).

p. 100, l. 1, **Otway.** Thomas Otway (1651-1685), the author of the "Orphan" (1680), and "Venice Preserved," who died in poverty in 1685 (Johnson's "Lives," Bohn, i. 245, *seq.*).

l. 2, **he confessed.** Mr. Cunningham gives the reference to the preface to his translation of Du Fresnoy; and adds, "that Dryden at any time 'looked on Otway with contempt' is not warranted by any other authority than Johnson's testimony."

l. 18, **the language of the school,** in academic and technical language.

l. 25, **verbaque provisam rem.** Horace, "De Arte Poetica," 311.

p. 101, l. 5, **unideal,** without having any idea or meaning.

l. 16, "**Then we upon our orb's.**" "Annus Mirabilis," stanza 164.

l. 26, "**I am as free.**" "Conquest of Granada," Part I., Act i., sc. 1.

l. 29, "**'Tis but because.**" "Tyrannic Love," Act v., sc. 1.

p. 102, l. 5, "**I beg no pity.**" "Don Sebastian," Act i., sc. 1.

l. 28, "**What precious drops are these.**" "Conquest of Granada," Part II., Act ii., sc. 1.

l. 36, **Dalilahs of the Theatre.** "All I can say for those passages, which are, I hope, not many, is, that I knew they were bad enough to please, even when I writ them: but I repent of them among my sins: and if any of these fellows intrude by chance into my present writings, I draw a stroke over all those *Dalilahs* of the Theatre: and am resolv'd I will settle myself no reputation by the applause of fools" (Epistle Dedicatory of the "Spanish Friar").

p. 103, l. 15, **virtue spooming before the wind.** Spoons appears to mean to run swiftly. The only authority given in the dictionaries is this passage from Dryden:

"When virtue spooms before a prosperous gale."

("Hind and Panther," Part. III., v. 96.)

l. 17, **optics,** optical glasses, telescopes.

l. 24, "**A hollow crystal.**" "Annus Mirabilis," stanza 281.

l. 30, "**When rattling bones.**" "Ode on Mrs. Anne Killigrew," vv. 184, 185.

p. 104, l. 7, **fraicheur**. Dryden spells it *fraischeur*.

“Hither in summer evenings you repair  
To take the fraicheur of the purer air.”  
 (“On the Coronation,” vv. 101, 102.)

l. 8, **fougue**. Dryden spells it *fogue* in the first edition of the “*Astræa Redux*,” v. 203:

“Henceforth their fougue must spend at lesser rate.”

p. 105, l. 4, **given it by Pope**. “Imitations of Horace,” Epistle I., Bk. II., v. 267, *seq.*

l. 20, **Phaer's “Virgil.”** Thomas Phaer (died about 1560) published a translation of the first seven books of the “*Æneid*” in 1558, and two others appear in the edition of 1562.

l. 21, **Hall's “Satires.”** Joseph Hall (1574-1656), Bishop of Exeter, and afterwards of Norwich, published the first instalment of his “Satires” (“*Virgidemiarum Libri III.*,” “Toothless Satires”) in 1597; three other books (“Biting Satires”) appeared next year. Hall was a famous preacher. For his encounter with Milton, see Johnson's “Life of Milton” (Bell's English Classics), pp. 12, 94.

l. 23, **first used by Spenser**. The metre made popular by the French romance of Alexander at the end of the twelfth century, was used by Robert of Gloucester in his “*Metrical Chronicle*” (about 1298) and “*Lives of the Saints*,” mixed with lines of greater length. The “*Faerie Queene*” made its first appearance in 1590 (Bks. I.-III.). For the further history of the measure, see p. 106.

l. 27, **Chapman's “Iliad.”** George Chapman (died 1634), poet and dramatist, published the first instalment of his “*Iliad*” in 1610, and the rest in 1611. He also translated the rest of the poems attributed to Homer.

p. 106, l. 3, **most soft and pleasing**. Johnson's “most soft and pleasing of our lyric measures” is the “Common metre” of our hymn books. It was a great favourite with the mild lyrical muse of the eighteenth century, and is perhaps capable of more absolutely vapid and insipid effects than any other of “our lyric measures.”

l. 9, **Drayton's “Polyolbion.”** Michael Drayton (1563-1631), author of “*Idea's Mirror*” (1594), “*The Barons' Wars*” (1596, 1598), and other poems, published his “*Polyolbion*,” a description of Britain, in 1613. In its complete form (1622) it contained some 16,000 lines.

l. 13, **Dryden professes**. Dedication of the “*Æneid*.” Scott's “*Dryden*,” xiv. 216. Dryden, however, does not put Cowley forward as his example, but Spenser. He says he regards the

Triplet and Pindaric (Alexandrine) as "the Magna Charta of heroic poetry, and am too much an Englishman to lose what my ancestors have gained for me."

l. 16, **Swift always censured them.** See Swift's letters to Pope (June 28th, 1715), and Beach (April 12th, 1735). Swift's "Works" (Bell), ii. 736, 737.

l. 35, **braces**, the brackets printed in the margins; see, for instance, pp. 101, 102, above.

p. 107, l. 13, **Fenton.** Elijah Fenton (1683-1750), a clergyman who assisted Pope in translating Homer. See Johnson's "Life of Pope" (Bell's English Classics), p. 156, *seq.*

l. 20, "**Together o'er the Alps.**" From Pope's "Epistle to Jervas" (the painter), v. 25 (Globe edition of "Pope," p. 449). With a slight misquotation of "fill'd" for "fir'd" in the second line.

p. 108, l. 9, **Davis.** Sir John Davies (1569-1626), a lawyer and a poet. He held several important legal appointments in Ireland, and had just been nominated Lord Chief Justice in England when he died. His chief works were "Orchestra, or a Poem on Dancing" (1596), and "Nosce Teipsum" (1599), one of the most successful attempts to treat philosophical subjects in verse. Of the latter Hallam said, "Perhaps no language can produce a poem, extending to so great a length, of more condensation of thought, or in which fewer languid verses will be found" ("Literature of Europe," ii. 227).

l. 18, **Mr. Milbourne's version.** See p. 93.

l. 28, **mast**, beech-nuts, acorns, horse-chestnuts, and other fruit of forest trees.

l. 35, **artful**, artificial, elaborately constructed.

p. 109, l. 2, **Cæan Isle.** Cæa was one of the Cyclades, where Aristæus, the son of Apollo, was said to have lived for a time.

i. 4, **Mænalus**, a mountain in Arcadia. Here used as equivalent to Arcadia.

l. 5, **Lycæan.** Lycæus was another mountain in Arcadia.

l. 19, **tutelar.** Note that the word is accented on the second syllable. (Cf. Latin, *tutela*.)

l. 28, **Tethys**, the daughter of Uranus and Gæa, and wife of Oceanus.

l. 32, **Cancer and Erigone.** Erigone was a daughter of Icarus, or Icarus, and was transformed into the constellation Virgo. Virgil does not mention the constellation Cancer. He says:

"Quâ locus Erigonen inter, Chelasque sequentes  
Panditur."

And this means between Virgo and the Scorpion.

p. 110, l. 5, **Rymer**. See p. 128.

l. 8, **Mr. Garrick**. David Garrick (1717-1779), educated at Lichfield, and at the age of nineteen sent to Edial to complete his education as a pupil of Dr. Johnson (see Introduction, p. xi). In 1741 he made his first appearance on the stage, and soon rose to the highest position in his profession. In 1747 till 1776 he managed Drury Lane Theatre. In the latter year he retired from the stage. He died three years afterwards, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

l. 12, **Rapin**. This is René Rapin (1621-1687), a French Jesuit, who wrote "*Réflexions sur la Poétique d'Aristote*" (1674-1675), and other critical works. Dryden says of him that he is "alone sufficient, were all other critics lost, to teach anew the rules of writing" (Scott's "Dryden," v. 109).

He is to be distinguished from the poet Nicholas Rapin (1540-1609), and from Paul de Rapin (1661-1725), a Frenchman who took refuge in England after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and wrote a history of England in French (1724).

p. 111, l. 7, **decency**, propriety.

l. 28, **in the second form**, in the second class. See Aristotle, "Poetics," II. xi.

l. 25, **the end of a tragedy**, the end for which tragedy exists. Aristotle had said that a tragedy "brought about through terror and pity the *κάθαρσις* (or purging) of such passions" ("Poetics," II. i.).

p. 112, l. 9, **places the fable first** "Poetics," II. iii.

p. 113, l. 3, **Mr. Rymer has done**. In his "Tragedies of the Last Age Considered."

p. 114, l. 30, **that is, he meant**. On this passage Matthew Arnold says: "Rymer meant, not what Dryden says, but what is true, that Sophocles improved the tragic drama by bringing a third interlocutor to the two, who before alone appeared on the scene at once."

p. 118, l. 10, "**King and No-king**." In Beaumont and Fletcher's play of that name (acted about 1611-1612). See Rymer, p. 56.

l. 16, **Rollo**, Duke of Normandy. A character in Fletcher's play, "The Bloody Brother."

l. 17, **arraigned by him**. Rymer, "Tragedies of the Last Age Considered," pp. 16-17.

p. 119, l. 2, **Library at Lambeth**. The library in the palace of the archbishops of Canterbury at Lambeth is one of the most interesting in London. It contains at the present time about 30,000 volumes and many manuscripts. It was founded by Archbishop Bancroft in 1610.

l. 3, **Dr. Vyse**. Dr. Vyse was librarian at Lambeth Palace.

Several letters from Dr. Johnson to him are given in Boswell, Bohn, iii. 157, *seq.*

l. 10, **Camariere d'Honore A.S.S.** Charles Dryden had been made Chamberlain of Honour to the Pope Innocent XII. See pp. 46 and 160, above. The initials A.S.S. mean "ad sedem sacram," "to the Holy See."

l. 13, **Franca per Mantoua**, franked (postage free) *via* Mantua.

l. 14, **our style**. England did not adopt the Gregorian calendar (new style) till 1751. In most Catholic countries it had been adopted in the sixteenth century.

The year in which Dryden wrote this letter was 1697.

l. 16, **Sir William Bowyer's**. Sir W. Bowyer, of Denham Court, in Buckinghamshire. He was distantly connected by marriage with Dryden's wife.

l. 31, **by Tonson's means**. Dryden and Tonson were on bad terms; but the poet's suspicions of his publisher were probably quite groundless. It is true that the latter greatly desired to see the Virgil dedicated to William III. But there is no reason to think he tried to intercept Dryden's letters.

p. 120, l. 3, **like King William**. Cunningham quotes the following epigram from the Harleian MSS.:

*"To be published in the next edition of Dryden's 'Virgil.'"*

"Old Jacob, by deep judgment swayed,  
To please the wise beholders,  
Has placed old Nassau's hook-nosed head  
On poor Æneas' shoulders.  
To make the parallel hold tack,  
Methinks there's little lacking;  
One took his father pick-a-pack,  
And t'other sent his packing."

According to Pope the plates were those of Ogilby's "Virgil," touched up (Spence, ed. 1858, p. 199).

l. 4, **Sir Robert Howard**. See pp. 4, 5, and 127.

l. 6, **"The Conquest of China."** A tragedy of this name by Settle was produced in 1676. Howard's play was, it would seem, never printed. Dryden says, in a subsequent letter, that he had laid it aside.

l. 9, **song for St. Cecilia's Feast**. See pp. 43, 98, and 157.

l. 13, **Mr. Bridgman**. This was the grandson to Sir Orlando Bridgman, who was Lord Keeper of the Great Seal after the fall of Clarendon (1667).

l. 20, **that degenerate order**. The priesthood.

l. 26, **according to his nativity**. On Dryden's belief in

astrology, see pp. 58 and 165. An elaborate fiction was built up by "Corinna," Mrs. Thomas, in her account of Dryden's life (already referred to, p. 158), that Dryden had foretold three periods of danger to his son, each of which had fallen out as predicted.

l. 30, **poor Harry**. Erasmus Henry, the poet's third son, who was at that time living at the monastery of the English Dominicans at Rome. See p. 160, above.

l. 32, **the profits might have been more**. The profits amounted to about £1,200, as Pope told Spence ("Anecdotes," ed. 1858, p. 198). Dryden means that he might have made more if he had dedicated the translation to William III.

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